

PERFECTION OF FAITH

(تكميل الإيمان و تقوية الإيقان)

By

Shaykh Abdul Haqq
Mohaddith Dehlvi



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OF
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Written By

Shaykh Abdul Haqq Mohaddith Dehlvi

(1551-1642)



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Publisher's Note

All Praise is for Allah (May He be Glorified) the Lord of the Universe, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful. “Perfection of Faith” is a concise and lucid presentation of one hundred and one major articles of faith by Shah Abdul Haqq Mohaddith Dehlvi (R.A.). He was a great scholar of Islam during Mughal era and was regarded as authority on matters of faith. This book is written for person of an average intellect. Translator has also taken great pain to translate the book close to its original meanings, by keeping it simple, easy to understand and fluent. We hope readers of all categories will be benefitted by this translation.

Muhammad Ibrahim Shah

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AND ITS COMMENTARY
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AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

All praise to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds! And prayers and peace to the Chief of the Messengers, the Imam of the Devout, the Last of the Prophets, Muhammad, and to his family, companions, and followers!

To proceed: The poor, lowly, weakest of the slaves of Allah, (Who is the All-Powerful, the Creator) Abdul Haqq, son of Saif-ud-Deen, son of Sadullah al-Bukhari, of Delhi said:

This is a book entitled *The Perfection of Faith and Fortification of Conviction* in which explanation is given of the doctrines of Islam and the foundations of the faith according to the Orthodox Way; including useful lessons, subtle meanings, and clear exposition designed, Allah willing, to affect the heart and strengthen the light of certainty within the innermost being.

I have written this book for every true believer and seeker of truth, and have confined myself to explaining only authentic doctrines without having recourse to the false and meaningless opinions of deviants. I have not employed the methods of argumentation and debate, nor have I mentioned the proofs of the theologists or the hair splitting of the philosophers, in order that the reader may not be pitched into the whirlpool of uncertainty and confusion. Indeed, Allah is the Lord of Success; and in His hands are the reins of fulfillment.

TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

All praise to Allah, the One, the All-knowing, the Eternal. And peace and blessings upon His Prophet, Muhammad Ibne Abdullah, al Mustapha, the Verifier and Verified: and upon his noble family and companions, and upon all those who followed in faith and in good deeds.

No study of Islam will be complete without a thorough understanding of the beliefs upon which it is based. Indeed, one might reflect, that is true of any religion. But Islam is far more than a system of beliefs, however elaborate, and the distinction between faith and practice is a fine one indeed. Thus, throughout the *Quran* the careful reader will notice that nearly every exhortation to faith will carry with it a corresponding exhortation to good deeds. So the requisite of a complete understanding of Islam is correct knowledge of the particulars of both faith and practice.

The Perfection of Faith, written by the most respected *Muhaddith* of Delhi during the Mughal Era, is a concise and lucid presentation of the major articles of faith; one hundred and one of them to be precise. Moreover, it is apparent that the book was written for the average person, as the language he used to explain these articles (themselves written in Arabic) was Persian, or the language of the common, yet educated Muslim in India of those times. Thus, even today, the book is eminently suitable as an introduction for student and layman alike to the beliefs adhered to by the Muslims of the majority, Sunni persuasion.

Shaykh Abdul Haqq was born in *Muharram* of 958 A.H. (1551) and lived for over ninety years, to 1052 A.H.

(1642). The period during which he lived and worked saw the greatest flowering of the Mughal Empire in political, economic, cultural, and intellectual terms. Thus, in an era of achievement, the *Shaykh* stood out as one of the most accomplished of all the scholars of Islam. His works, which number over forty, include commentary on *Hadith* and *Fiqh*, history, *Tasawwuf*, beliefs, Quranic sciences, and others. Moreover, the *Shaykh* was an accomplished poet and his verses may be found strewn throughout his works.

Yet, perhaps the most important matter of note for the reader of this translation is that the *Shaykh* was considered by his contemporaries to be the final authority in Mughal India on matters of faith. This is especially noteworthy in view of the developments which took place at the court of the great Mughal Emperor, Akbar who, patronised an attempt to synthesise the major religions in his realm; including Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism and others. Thus the scholars of Islam were called upon time and again to expound the doctrines of their faith, and to defend the faith from those who would interpret it to serve the interests of their masters. So it was in this atmosphere of inquiry and trial that the *Shaykh* produced his works, including the one now before the reader.

The translation was made from an edition of the book, in the original Persian and Arabic, published in Delhi in 1341 A.H. (1923) by the *Maiba-e-Mujtabai*. An Urdu translation of the work was published separately by the same publisher at about the same period, and a second translation to Urdu was published in Pakistan in Karachi in the early 70's. Thus it may be seen that the popularity of the book has diminished little.

Every effort has been made to ensure that the translation accurately reflects the meaning of the original.

However, at two places passages have been deleted for reasons explained in notes on the text where the deletions have occurred. In addition, explanatory notes have been added wherever the translator felt it necessary to do so, and it is hoped that these will add to the present utility of the book. Indeed, some of these notes will be seen to be polemical in nature. However, as the *D'awah* and *Irshaad* programme under which the book is being published distributes the majority of its English language publications in Africa, it was felt that these notes were essential.

And it is Allah who grants guidance and success: His is the Dominion, and unto Him do all things return.

Islamic Research Institute
International Islamic University
Islamabad, Pakistan.

Yusuf Talal Ali
Chief of the Translation
. Bureau.

نَكْبِيلُ الْإِيمَانِ وَلِقَوْيَةِ الْإِقَانِ
**THE PERFECTION OF FAITH
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CHAPTER I

1. Everything has its own fixed reality:

حَقَّانِ الْأَشْيَاءِ ثَابِتَةٌ

All beliefs and practices revolve on this fundamental point; that, in fact, there is an objective reality to each and every thing, and that conjecture and imagination play no part in this matter. Water, in fact, is water and fire is fire. It would be absurd to suppose that if we believe fire to be water, that it will actually be water; or if we believe water to be fire that it would actually become fire.

To engage in argumentation or subtle reasoning in order to prove such beliefs is no more than sophistry. Such beliefs are legally absurd and untenable. No intelligent person would claim that water and fire are simply illusions and that, if there is something of reality to them, that it would be arbitrary and totally dependent upon the individual's belief or conception.

Another group of sophists doubts the existence or non-existence of everything. Finally, they doubt their own doubting. This is no more than senseless contention, and to argue with them is sheer futility. A fitting retribution would be that they be burned. Then, if they admit to the reality of fire and heat, they have admitted their error; and if they remain silent, they will never take another breath.

2. The World is an originated phenomenon:

العالم حادث

Besides the person and attributes of Allah, everything is impermanent. Clearly, what comes from non-existence into existence is not eternal. A *Hadith* of the Prophet, upon whom be peace, gives evidence:

"Allah was, and there was nothing with Him."

Another proof is that as the world is a place of occurrences and ever liable to changes, and, as whatever can be characterised in such a way cannot possibly be eternal, therefore, the world cannot be eternal. In the case of the eternal, change of any kind whatsoever is impossible. As only the person and attributes of Allah are free from all change and alteration, only Allah is eternal.

3. And is subject to destruction

وهو قابل للفناء

The world, after coming into existence, will be destroyed. Allah has said,

"All things perish, except His face" (28: 88).

Therefore, the angels, heaven, hell and whatever else there may be concerning which word has come that they are to last forever are also subject to destruction, if only for a moment; after which they will remain and not be destroyed again.

4. It has a Maker

وله صانع

For the world there is a Lord who brought it from non-existence into existence. As the world is non-eternal, and

that means that after non-existence it came into existence, then it follows that there had to be someone to bring it into existence. If it existed by itself, it would have always existed. However, since it has not (always existed), then it follows that it did not come about by itself, but through the offices of another.

5. Whose existence was never preceded by non-existence

نديم

It is necessary that the Lord of the World be eternal. If He were not, then He would be temporal and part of the world, and not its Lord.

6. Who is a Necessary Being

واجب الوجود

His existing springs from His own person and not from any outside source. Were this not so, then He would be dependent upon another, and that is not befitting of the exalted position of the Almighty. It is necessary that at the end of the chain of creation there be one Being whose existence is self-sustained, who can never not be. Were there not such a being, the chain would go on indefinitely; and that is illogical.

7. One

واحد

"Surely Allah is only one God" (4: 170).

The creation and organisation of the universe could never come about properly if there were more than one ruler and creator.

8. Living, Knowing, Powerful, Willing

حي، عالم، قادر، مريد

Whatever He does, He does of His own power and choice, without any compulsion. The creation of such an amazing and intricate world-order, with such a degree of perfection would be impossible without these attributes.

Such a world could never come about at the hands of one inanimate, ignorant, weak or compelled. These attributes in varying quantities are also to be found in what He has created. If they were not present in His person, then how could He create them in others?

9. Speaking, Hearing, Seeing

متكلم، سميع، بصير

The mute, the deaf and the blind are all imperfect, whereas Allah is free of all imperfection. Each of these attributes or divine predicates, is mentioned in the *Quran*. The reality of these attributes and, moreover, of all of Allah's divine attributes cannot be grasped by our mind or reason. We know only that Allah Most High has created in mankind attributes somewhat akin to His own. Then, through the attributes of mankind, we can glimpse one aspect of the many aspects of Allah's attributes. However, the truth of the matter is that mankind's attributes in no way resemble those of the Almighty.

10. His attributes are eternal and everlasting

صفاته قديمة باقية

The attributes of the Almighty are eternal in exactly the same way that His sacred person is eternal.

11. Temporal events do not take place in His person

ولا يقوم بذاته حادث

The sacred being of Allah Most High is not a place where events occur. However many His true perfections may be, they are all fixed in eternity. This is because the place where temporal events occur must, of necessity, itself be temporal. Obviously the eternal can never become temporal.

- 12. He is not body, substance, accident, form, calculable or bounded; nor is He located in any direction, place or time.**

وَلَيْسَ بِجَسْمٍ وَلَا جُوهرًا وَلَا عَرْضٍ وَلَا مَصْوَرٍ وَلَا مَرْكَبٍ وَلَا
مَعْدُودٌ وَلَا مَحْدُودٌ وَلَا فِي جَهَةٍ وَلَا فِي مَكَانٍ وَلَا فِي زَمَانٍ

The Lord of the World is not body or substance; that is to say He has no physical existence, nor is He an accident or contingent. An accident, or a non-essential quality, is one of the attributes of bodies, like black or white. He is not a form. Allah has no figure or shape. Furthermore, He is not a composite made by the joining of disunited pieces. Nor is He calculable or capable of being counted. He is not bounded so that He might be fixed or limited. He is not to be found in any direction; He is neither up nor down, in front or behind, left or right. He is not located in any place or time. How? When these are the attributes of the ephemeral? The Lord of the World is free of all that is worldly. The meaning of His not being in any time is that time cannot contain or encompass Him, and that His existence is not dependent upon time. He was when there was not time, and He is now that there is time. Thus, he is not in time but rather without time.

- 13. He has no similar or analogue, no contrary or peer, no supporter or helper**

لَا مِثْلَ لَهُ وَلَا شَبَهٌ وَلَا خَدْ وَلَا لَانَدٌ وَلَا ظَهِيرٌ وَلَا مَعْنَى

There is nothing similar or equal to Allah the Sublime; not in His attributes and not in His essence. Likewise, He has no contrary or peer set in opposition to Him. When an opponent is of a different general category, he is called a contrary (ضد) ; and when two opponents are of the same general category each is called a peer (لئيل). Furthermore, Allah Most High has no backers or helpers of any kind who extend Him their support.

14. He neither unites with nor incarnates Himself in another

وَلَا يَتَحْدُدُ بِغَيْرِهِ وَلَا يَحْلُّ فِيهِ

It is inconceivable that the Lord of the World would join with another (or others) to make one whole. Likewise, His incarnation in a living being is unthinkable. It is impossible for two things to become one, as one is clearly the opposite of two. The entering and occupying the place of another is an attribute of substances, like water in mud, or light in a house, or a person in a place.

15. He is characterised by all the attributes of perfection, free of the features of defect or decline

وَمَصْفُوفٌ بِجَمِيعِ صَفَاتِ الْكَمَالِ مَنْزَهٌ عَنْ سَمَاتِ النَّقْصِ وَالْزُّرْوَالِ

In short, whatever is of the general category of permanence and perfection is to be found in the Almighty, and He is unsullied by any of the characteristics of defect or decline.

16. He will be visible to the believers on the Day of Judgement

وَهُوَ مَرِىٌ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

It is a matter of faith that Allah will show Himself to the believers on the Day of Judgement.

The Prophet Muhammad, upon whom be peace, said,

*"Soon you will see your Lord, on the day of Judgement,
just as you see the full moon on the 12th night."*

The simile here is intended only to compare one vision's clarity to the other's. The comparison of the person of the Lord to the moon is not intended. In seeing Allah on the Day of Judgement, there will be no facing or confronting, distance or proximity. On that day the eyes will be given the power to see with what today is called the heart's eye. In summary, just as we know Him today to be Inscrutable, when we see Him on that day, he will also be Inscrutable. The next world is the place of revelation; Whatever is hidden or absent today will be present and visible in the next world. Since the Prophet, upon whom be peace, has given us word of this matter, it is necessary that we have faith in it. As to how it will take place, we must conclude that no one besides Allah knows.

It is mentioned in some books, and has even become well-known, that the angels will not be granted sight of the Almighty except Jibra'il; and even then only once in his entire lifetime. It has also been said that the *Jinn* will not partake of this sight. *Jalal ud Deen Sayuti* (d. 911 A.H.) in a number of his books has verified this saying as being not entirely true. He points to the fact that Abul Hasan Ashari, an Imam of the *Ahl us Sunnah* (*Sunni Orthodoxy*), has recorded in his book that the angels will be granted this privilege in the next world. Imam Baihaqi has concurred with him on this point and has adduced as evidence a number of *Hadith*. The scholars of later times are nearly agreed on this point. However, in the case of the *Jinn* there is certainly some basis for denying their being granted this privilege. According to *Imam Abu Hanifahh* and other great

scholars, the *Jinn* will receive no rewards and will not enter Paradise. The most that they will receive will be deliverance from the fires of Hell.

Nonetheless, the Grace of Allah is most extensive: It is quite possible that at one time or another they will receive these blessings; though not as men, who will partake of it either everyday or at least weekly, on the day of *Jum'ah*.

There is also a difference of opinion concerning whether or not women will be given to partake of this divine favour. The truth of the matter is that from time to time, in the same way that the days of *Eid* in this world occur annually, they will be granted this beatific vision. With the believing men it will be different. It is recorded in the traditions that the fortunate ones among them will partake of it every morning and evening, and the ordinary believers, every *Jum'ah*. This is a summary of what *Jalalud-Deen Sayuti* has written.

I, *Abd ul Haqq*, seeking the favour of Allah, say: women are certainly included in the general body of believer just as angels and *Jinn* are. All believers will take part in the bliss of this vision. It is possible that this miracle will be performed in one way for men and in another way for angels and *Jinn*. No matter what the case, it is not permissible to exclude women from this blessing. How is it possible to even imagine that Khadija al-Kubra, *Fatimah az-Zahraa*, *Ayeshah as Siddiqah* and the other women of the house of the Prophet, or *Maryam* and *Asiyah*, all of them the princesses of mankind, more perfect and knowledgable than multitudes of men, how is it that they will be prevented from the blessing of seeing Allah? Or that they will receive less of this blessing and miracle than ordinary men?

The claim that women will not partake of this miracle owing to their being closeted in tents is a weak one. The tents of Paradise will in no way resemble those of this world.

The masculine gender in the verses which refer to this fact, (بِرَاهِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ) “the believers will see Him”, and (إِنَّكُمْ سَتَرَوْنَ رَبَّكُمْ) “Soon you will see your Lord...” is used only because, in the grammar of the Arabic language, the masculine tense always takes precedence. Yet Allah knows best.

Sayuti has also written that these details and particulars will apply only after the entry into Paradise. At the site of the last judgement, none will be singled out. But everyone, including infidels and hypocrites, will see Him; with this difference, that he will appear on that day in the attributes of conquering Majesty. Thereafter, the infidels will be deprived of any vision of Him, thus increasing their agony and grief.

There is also a difference of opinion concerning the witnessing of Allah in dreams. The most authentic opinion, and the one most often recorded on the authority of our predecessors, is that it is indeed possible (and not merely a trick of the *Shaitan*).

It is reported that *Imam Ahmad Ibne Hanbal* said, “I saw the Lord in a dream and asked Him, ‘Oh Lord, what form of worship is best? And what is the shortest way to You? He said ‘The recital of the Quran Majid’.

It is also recorded that *Imam Abu Hanifahh* saw the Almighty a hundred times in his sleep. Ibne Seereen, one of the greatest men of the generation following the companions and the foremost of scholars in the

interpretation of dreams has said, "Whoever sees the Lord in a dream, will enter Paradise and find relief from every unhappiness." In truth, this is a witnessing with the heart and note an actual sighting. Whenever someone sees Him with his "power of sight", he becomes the beholder of His likeness, where the beheld is not an image but a likeness. The difference between a likeness and an image is that an image resembles in every way that which is being compared to it. In a likeness this equality in every aspect is not a condition. For example, the intellect is often compared to the sun, though the intellect is certainly not an image of the sun. Inspite of this, the sun is taken to be the likeness of the intellect; for just as the world of the perceptible is illuminated by the light of the sun, the world of the ponderable is illuminated by the intellect. In the likeness this amount of relation is enough. In the same way, a King is likened to the sun and a *Wazir* to the moon. Should one see the sun in his dream, the interpretation would be that he will meet a King. If he dreamt he was the moon, a *Wazir* would be interpreted. Allah, may He be Exalted, has said:

"The likeness of His light is as a niche wherein is a lamp, the lamp in a glass....." (24: 35)

Allah is free of any lamps, glasses or niches being His image, though these things do bear likeness to His light. Without doubt, the "*The strong rope*" (3: 103) spoken of in reference to the *Quran* is not intended as an image but a likeness. The world of sleep is the world of likeness. The way in which the Prophet, upon whom be peace, can be seen is exactly the same as we have outlined here. The whole truth in this matter can be sought in the books of the Imam, *Hujjatul Islam*, Al Ghazaali.

Concerning the witnessing of Allah in this world, and in a waking state, two opinions have been recorded. According to Abu Qasim Qushairy, the best is the one which disallows it. Under discussion here is its possibility, otherwise there is general agreement that it has never actually occurred except in the case of the Prophet Muhammad, upon whom be peace, on his night journey.

The traditionists, jurists, theologians and *Sufi* scholars have generally agreed that the saints (*Awliyaa*) have not been granted this kind of waking and worldly vision. In the *Ta'arruf* it is written, "To our knowledge, no *Sufi* has ever made such a claim, nor has any authentic report reached us of anyone's claiming such a vision; with the exception, perhaps, of a handful of ignorant fools. The *Sufi* scholars are agreed on the discrediting of such a claimant on the grounds that he is a liar. They say that such a claim is a clear indication of his lack of familiarity with the truth, and that he has not truly understood the nature of the Almighty."

Shaykh Ala-ud-Deen al Qaunawi, in his commentary on the *Ta'arruf*, has said if anyone should receive an authentic report of such an occurrence, he must interpret it to mean something other than the obvious. In the *Tafseer Kawaashi* it is written that whoever holds, as a matter of faith, that Allah can be seen with the eyes is not a Muslim. In relation to the Prophet, upon whom be peace, however, this belief is correct. Ardabeely, in his *Shafiite* book of law entitled *Kitab-ul-Anwaar*, writes that whoever says, 'I have seen Allah with my eyes and have conversed with Him vocally,' is an infidel. To close this discussion I shall quote from the poem entitled, *Aqeedae Manzoomah* (The Rhymed Articles of Faith):

*Whoever says in this world that he looked and saw
Allah.*

*That person is a heretic who's overstepped the law.
He's contradicted all the Prophets and the Holy Writ.
He's deviated from Shariah and rejected it.
Regarding such a heretic our Lord has spoken right.
On Judgement Day his face will be as black as darkest
night.
May Allah preserve us! There is no power nor strength
except in Allah.*

17. He is the Creator of all things

خالق لجميع الأشياء

He, may His name be exalted, is the Creator of the heavens and earth and every thing therein. All beings and actions are brought about through His creation and power.

18. And their Governor and Predestinator

ومدبرها ومقدّرها

The term governor means that He is aware of the outcome of all events and has created them with mastery. By His being Predestinator is meant that He ordained for all things a certain fate and a fixed measure in eternity. Good, evil, benefit, detriment, propriety, impropriety; all of these things are by His command and power.

19. He knows all that there is to be known

عالم بجميع المعلومات

He knows all; from matters pertaining to the individual to those encompassing the universe; the particular, the general, everything. There is not an atom in the universe of which He has no knowledge.

20. He is Omniscient and nothing is incumbent upon Him

وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ، وَلَا يَحْبُبُ عَلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ

Neither mercy nor wrath, reward or punishment; nothing is obligatory or incumbent upon the Lord-be He Exalted.

Allah does whatever He wills,
No one can command Allah.

The obedient are rewarded through His grace, and the transgressors are punished through His justice. In both cases He is to be praised; in judgement and subduing, as well as in grace and mercy. No one has any claim on Him, and no one deserves anything from Him as their due. The rewards and punishments He promised to those who obeyed and to those who disobeyed will undoubtedly be meted out, but not as something incumbent upon Him. If we were to suppose that He did something to contradict all that He promised, there would still be no one who could question Him as to the why and wherefore of His actions.

21. He has no objectives

وَلَا غَرَضٌ لِفَعْلَتِهِ

The Lord has no objectives in what He does because whoever has an objective has a need of carrying out his objective. In everything that He does there is wisdom, though most of it is incomprehensible to mankind. However, the benefits of whatever wisdom they can understand all revert to them. Allah has no need of those benefits. The existence or non-existence of mankind, their general welfare or lack of it, these things are all the same to the Being of the Lord. Of His own essential generosity and volition, however, He does as he has promised. If what He does falls under the headings of wisdom and benevolence,

then, still, it cannot be said that it was incumbent upon Him to act in that manner, or in any other manner.

22. Besides Him there is no ruler

وَلَا حَاكِمٌ سُواهُ

All rule is His rule. In accordance with His ruling, acts are classified as *Haraam* or *Halaal*, becoming or unbecoming, means for attaining reward or punishment, etc. The becoming act is that act for which Allah has given a command. That which he has forbidden is termed an unbecoming act. Whether or not act is to be considered becoming or unbecoming is pursuant to the command or prohibition of the Almighty Law-Giver. Reason in no way enters into the considering a certain act becoming and a means for attaining reward, or another act unbecoming and a cause for punishment. Thus, the mountain dweller, who never received word of Islam, if we imagine that such a person could exist, who lived and died on his mountain without ever mixing with people from the civilised world, will not be held responsible in the next world for, and will not be punished because of, what he did or did not do in this world. However, there is a second group of scholars who hold that he will be punished if he does not have faith in Allah and in His oneness; because the beliefs that the world has a Creator, that He is One, and that He is characterised by the attributes of perfection are discernible through the exercise of reason alone, and are not dependent upon the commands of the Law-Giver.

The evidence adduced by the first group is taken from the *Quran*.

"*We never chastise, unless We have first sent forth a messenger*" (17: 15).

After that, if they refuse the call to Islam and oppose its Prophet, upon whom be peace, they will be punished. The interpretation that asserts the meaning of “messenger” in this verse to be reason is nothing more than groundless guesswork.

Kamal ud Deen Ibne ul Humaam, one of the greatest of our orthodox, *Hanafi* scholars, has written that the first opinion is the better of the two and the one chosen by the *Hanafis*. Abul-Bashar al-Bazdawi has concurred with him and relates the words of *Imam Abu Hanifahh*:

“Becoming is what the Law-Giver has deemed becoming, and unbecoming is what the Law-Giver has deemed unbecoming.”

An act in itself is neither becoming nor unbecoming. Becoming and unbecoming imply reward and punishment in the next world; matters which are of necessity beyond our knowledge. Therefore, these are terms which cannot be dealt with rationally.¹ However, praise and censure are matters often discernable by reason alone, as in the praise of justice and censure of tyranny, or the considering of knowledge as an attribute of perfection and ignorance as an attribute of imperfection.

23. Allah has angels ﷺ،

It is a matter of faith that Allah has created angels. The angels are hidden bodies of light able to assume any form

I. Most *Hanafi* scholars subscribe to the views of *Imam Maturidi* who holds that acts are in and of themselves either becoming or unbecoming; but that mankind's reason alone is not enough to distinguish the one from the other. Therefore, where acts of a legal nature are concerned, the only way we can know if they are becoming or unbecoming is by means of the Law-Giver. Trans.

that they wish. In actuality they are nothing more than spirits, and in relation to them their bodies are as clothing. They do not give birth and they have no ancestry. They are neither masculine nor feminine. In the heavens and the earth, in every part of the world, they have been appointed as preservers, directors, and protectors. A number of angels have been assigned to every man; some to record his deeds, and some to protect him from the *Shaitan*, *Jinn*, and mankind. There is no place in either the upper or lower worlds where angels do not flourish. Indeed, there is a tradition which says that all of creation is divided into ten parts; nine parts for angels, and one part for the rest of creation.

24. Who have two, three, and four sets of wings

ذو اجنحة مثنى وثلاث ورباع

It is confirmed in the Holy Quran that the angels have wings. Therefore, it is necessary that we consider this a matter of faith. With regard to its true meaning, we must either entrust it to Allah, or interpret it to signify the angelic powers. Yet Allah knows best. The number of wings mentioned is not intended to be definitive because, in a *Hadith* concerning the Night Journey of the Prophet, upon whom be peace, *Jibra'il* is mentioned as having seven hundred wings.

25. Among them are Jibra'il

منهم جبريل

From among all the angels there are four who enjoy an especially high rank, and who have been entrusted with the world's most important matters, and the kingdom of Heaven's most serious affairs. Among these is *Jibra'il*, to whom has been entrusted the carrying of knowledge and

the conveying of revelation (*Wahy*) to the Prophets, upon whom be peace.

3 26. Mika'il

ومكائيل

The second is *Mika'il*, into whose care the division and distribution of all creation's nourishment has been entrusted.

27. Israfil

واسرافيل

The third is *Israfil* whose duty it will be to blow the horns of destruction and resurrection.

28. And Izra'il

وعزرايل

The fourth is *Izra'il*, who has been assigned to take, at the time of death, all the souls in the world.

The majority of scholars are of the opinion that, of the four, *Jibra'il* is the most excellent. Some are of the opinion that all four are equal in their excellence.

Besides these four, the remaining angels are also much esteemed and of high station. Among them are eight who support the Throne. The magnitude of their bodies is such that there are seven hundred years between their earlobes and their shoulders. This is the way they have been described in the traditions.

29. For every one of them there is a fixed position

لكل واحد منهم مقام معروف

Every one of the angels has a designated position at the court of the Almighty. Each has a special rank in closeness to the Lord, and a determined standing in the knowledge of

the Divine. They never transgress these bounds. They possess whatever perfections besit their positions and they have no desire for the attainment of further perfection because in their cases the potential is the same as the actual; and desire exists only when something is missed or unattained. This is the reason behind the saying that angels have not passion; which is not that they have no love for the Almighty Master, or that they have no spiritual knowledge of the Creator.

30. And they do not disobey Allah, but do as they are ordered

لَا يَعْصُونَ اللَّهَ مَا أَمْرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُنْهَوْنَ

The angels are characterised by their lack of opposition to the commands of their Lord. The disobedience of *Iblees* is attributable to the fact that he was of the *Jinn* and not an angel. Indeed, he was called an angel, but that was only because he was so obedient and so often engaged in worship. Nonetheless, in the end, the true nature of the *Jinn* in him revealed itself, and he was lost.

31. The Almighty sent revelation to His Prophets

وَلَهُ كِتَابٌ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَى رَسُولِهِ

Allah, be He exalted, sent revelation to certain of His Prophets and charged them all with obedience to the teachings therein. In all, it is said, there were one hundred¹

¹ Not a great deal is known about the *Injeel*. It is, however, a matter of certainty that it is not one of the four gospels included in the New Testament of the Catholic and Protestant Christians. In fact, no trace of it seems to exist today other than a few obscure references which indicate that, like the Quran, the *Injeel* was an oral recitation of revelation. Unlike the Quran, however, the *Injeel* recitation was not preserved in the hearts of the believers; nor is it likely that any written record was ever made of it. Thus, within a generation of his heavenly ascent, the followers of the Prophet Jesus fell to disputing among themselves over the most basic of his teachings. What resulted was a plethora

and four heaven-sent writs. Of this number four are particularly revered and well known.

32. Among which was the Torah منها التوراة

The Torah was revealed to the Prophet *Musa*, upon whom be peace, and was followed, thenceforth, by all the Prophets of *Bani Isra'il*.

33. The Zaboor والزبور

This revelation was sent to the Prophet *Dawood*, upon whom be peace.

34. The Injeel والإنجيل

This revelation was sent to the Prophet Jesus, upon whom be peace.¹

Every one of these writs or recitations, while mentioning the Almighty and matters of law, also contains detailed prophecies of the coming of the Prophet Muhammad, upon whom be peace, and his companions. The Prophets of times gone by used to spend their finest hours citing the virtues and praises of the Prophet Muhammad, upon whom be peace, seeking in that way to recommend themselves to the notice and favour of the Lord.

of "gospels" each claiming to tell the authentic story of the Prophet's life and teachings.

What is of note is that none of the gospels still extant was written by one of Jesus's disciples, or even by one of the same or following generation. Of more ominous significance is that the four "gospels" included in the New Testament were actually chosen by a special church council convened in the fourth century AD for the purpose of putting an end to doctrinal controversy. That the temporal authorities had an interest in quelling these controversies, which in fact had led to large scale civil disorder in many parts of the Byzantine Empire, is

35. And the Glorious Quran والقرآن العظيم

Pre-eminent among the heaven-sent books, the Holy *Quran* was revealed to the Last of the Prophets, upon whom be peace, and is distinguished from all other revelation especially by the miraculously inimitable nature of its Arabic text.

36. This writ wherein is no doubt, a guidance to the God conscious

ذلك الكتاب لا ريب فيه هدى للمتقين

All of the divine books, in the sense that they come from One Divine Source are equals, though in other ways some are more excellent than others. Similarly the Prophets, insomuch as they are the chosen of Allah, are equal.

"We make no division between any one of His Prophets" (2: 286).

However, in terms of rank, some are more excellent than others.

"And those Prophets, some We have preferred above others" (2: 253).

37. His names are fixed

، وأسماؤه تورّفية

The name of Allah can only be known on His authority. Thus, He may be called by any of the names related in the *Quran* or *Hadith*. However, it is not permissible to call Him by a name arrived at on one's own, even though that name might reasonably be suitable, or even synonymous to one of His known names. For

example, He may be called the 'Healer' (*Shafi*), but not the Doctor; or the 'Benefactor' (*Jawaad*), but not the Lavish.

Furthermore, this prohibition applies exclusively to the naming of Allah, and not to describing Him. This is because the giving of names is a right of the named and no one else. The names under discussion here are those Arabic names that have to do with His attributes, not with those proper names which are used in every language to designate the Divine Being. Indeed, it is better not to call Him by such a foreign, proper name, especially if that name is used by disbelievers in an erroneous and unsound manner.

Futhermore, the names of Allah are not confined to the often-remembered ninety-nine. In fact, He has names of which mankind knows nothing. In the *Shariah* itself more than 99 have been recorded. However, these 99 possess qualities which are not present in the other names. Accordingly, the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said,

"Allah has ninety-nine names, and whoever remembers them will enter Paradise."

If a king should claim, "I have a thousand soldiers such that whoever takes them into battle will be victorious," then this does not mean that the king has no more than a thousand soldiers. On the contrary, the king's soldiers may be too numerous to count, which among them are a thousand of the sort which he described. Likewise, the names of Allah are too numerous to count, yet among them are ninety-nine which if remembered will give one entrance to Paradise. Yet Allah knows best.

**38. He is the Creator of all the deeds of humanity.
Disbelief and disobedience are of His ordaining and**

will, but have not His approval.

**وهو خالق لأفعال العباد. والكفر والمعصية بارادته وتقديره
لابرضاه**

Once it has been established that Allah is the Creator of all things, it follows logically that the actions of humanity are also the result of His creating and ordaining.

"Allah created you and what you do" (96 : 37).

Then the belief and disbelief, the obedience and disobedience, the piety and impiety of humanity has all come about through His Will, His Command and His Decree. But He, may He be Exalted, approves of faith, obedience and devoutness; and is angered by disbelief, disobedience and impiety. For that reason He has said,

"He is not pleased by unbelief from His servants" (29 : 7).

Willing and creating are one matter, whereas approval is another matter. Approval takes place when He gives the command to 'do'. Yet He may, due to some hidden wisdom known only to Him, command something and desire that it not actually take place.

An example of the approval's being secondary to the command is that of the king who wanted to establish the obedience or dis-obedience of his attendant by ordering him to perform a certain task. The king's purpose was to show everyone present that his attendant was disobedient, something that he already knew.

Then, even though he did not want the task performed, he charged his servant with its performance.

Then the wisdom in the Divine command and prohibition is in the uncovering, from the rolls of eternity, the real state of humanity, so that the obedient and devout might be distinguished from the rebellious and impious. Yet Allah knows best the truth of the situation.

39. Mankind possess voluntary actions on the basis of which they are rewarded and punished.

وللعباد أفعال اختبارية يثابون بها ويعاقبون عليها

Inspite of the fact that everything is by the will and ordaining of the Creator, man has free will and is not under any compulsion in what he does. Reward and punishment are based on this free will. The meaning of the terms "free will" and "compulsion" should first be understood in order that the truth of this doctrine may become apparent.

The actions which issue from mankind are of two kinds. The first can be explained in this way; that man, if after imagining something, should find it to be agreeable to him, then a desire will be created within him and he will be moved to follow it. On the other hand, if he should find it to be disagreeable to him, then aversion will be created in his heart and he will attempt to refrain from doing that. Before the creation of desire or aversion it was all the same whether he did or did not do this particular thing. The possibility existed that he will do or not do; both in the state of imagining, when the action was being considered as a possibility, and before the imagining, when the action was only a remote possibility. This process is called will, and the resultant action is called an act of will or a voluntary action.

The second kind of action is that occurs independent of the process of imagining and then either desiring or not desiring; like one's shivering in the cold. This kind of

action is called compulsory or involuntary. Taking the meaning of will to be as we have here defined, its denial would be like denying the senses of hearing and sight in mankind. If someone should say that all of man's movements and actions are of the second kind (like the shivers), then he would be denying his senses, and no rational man could accept such a claim.

However, the difficulty lies in this; since the actions of man come into existence in accordance with Divine prescience, decree, and will, then it follows that if He – be He Exalted – knew and willed that such and such an action should be performed by so and so, then the action must take place as decreed; regardless of whether the will was exercised, as in the case of the voluntary action, or not exercised, as in the case of the shivers. Then we are forced to conclude that man has had nothing to do with the actual willing and bringing into existence of this particular deed; we can only say that he imagined and then desired it.

Therefore, man's actions may be said to be of his own free will, though not originally. For example, if one's eyes were open and still one saw nothing, this would not be of one's will. However, if one saw something, and if that something were appealing, then desire would be created and one would begin to act to bring about the desired. Then, man has free will; but, at the same time, in his free will he has no free will. This is what the scholars mean when they say;

"Man may choose his action, but in his choice he is compelled."

In other words he is outwardly free and inwardly compelled.

In truth, the question of predestination, or of the Divine decree in conjunction with the doctrine of free will has always been a matter of consternation. Confronted with it, the most appropriate refuge that we may seek is in the following verse of the Quran.

"He shall not be questioned as to what He does, but they shall be questioned" (23 : 21).

Imam Jafar as - Sadiq said,

"There is no compulsion and no free will, but rather something between the two."

Absolute compulsion is the doctrine of a sect called the *Jabariyyah*. They claim that man has no free will at all and that his actions are like those of vegetables and minerals. At the other end of the spectrum, absolute free will is the doctrine of a sect called the *Qaderiyah* whose belief is that everything man does is of his own free will, that he is independent in his actions, and that he is their creator. Then *Imam Jafar as - Sadiq* meant to say that both of these doctrines are invalid and expressive of either too much or too little. As the best way is the middle way, we may imagine the truth to lie somewhere between the two.

The intellect, however, in attempting to locate this middle ground is often bewildered. Actually, though, this bewilderment is nearly exclusively the lot of those pedants and debators who seek to establish faith through reason. Until something is digested by their intellects, or has appealed to their reason, they refuse to believe in it.

For those of us who believe, however, the *Shariah* and the Quran afford ample and indisputable proof in this

matter. The Quran teaches that everything is by the power and will of Allah and that inspite of this, obedience and disobedience emanate from man himself. It also teaches that Allah never commits injustice, but that man himself is the one who commits it.

"Nor would Allah ever treat them unjustly, but they dealt unjustly with themselves" (30 : 9).

"Allah created you and what you do" (96 : 37).

These two verses serve to establish both sides of the question, ascribing creation to Allah and action to mankind. It is essential that we have faith in the truth of both sides of the question by believing creation to come from Allah and actions to come from man. It is another matter if the true nature of these matters remains beyond our understanding. Furthermore, the Shariah with its commands and prohibitions is based on the principle of free will. The necessity of maintaining this belief should be apparent to all.

It was through the Prophet, upon whom be peace, that we came to know of the question of predestination; and through him we learned about free will and the Divine decree. When both matters are teachings of the Prophet, upon whom be peace, then what is there to argue about? Rather we need only to believe in both and have faith that, at some middle ground they are eventually reconciled. In truth, even to delve into this matter is in itself a sign of deviation and ignorance. Nothing of worldly or spiritual significance is therein to be gained. We must do what we can and trust in the Lord.

"Do! For everything you have been created for has been made easy for you".

If, after hearing the above-quoted words of the Prophet, upon whom be peace, the inner being is overcome by waves of doubt and vacillation, then the whole question of faith should be reconsidered. Faith itself is the belief in all the teachings of the Prophet, upon whom be peace. If one based his faith on decisions of his own reasoning, he could only be said to have faith in himself; not in the Prophet, upon whom be peace.

This should have been our approach to this question from the very first, especially when our intention in this book is no more than to briefly outline; yet the pen will from time to time exhibit a tyrannical nature. Allah! Forgive us our faults, and protect us from error, and do not leave us to stray on our own!

40. Allah causes to stray whomsoever He wills and guides whomsoever He wills

وَاللَّهُ يَضْلِلُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ

No one can show the right way to someone the Almighty has led astray, and no one can cause to go astray someone He has guided. This is recorded both in the Quran and the *Hadith*. However, sometimes we find guidance attributed to the *Quran* or to the Prophet, upon whom be peace. Similarly, delusion has been attributed to *Shaitan* and to false gods. Two meanings may be ascribed to guidance; 1/ to point out the right way, 2/ to conduct, by means of the right way, to a destination. The second of these meanings holds true only in respect to the Most Divine Majesty. The first meaning of guidance is that which we find attributed to the *Quran* and the Prophet, upon whom be peace, in that they guide to the right way (*Siraatul Mustaqeem*) i.e. point out. In the light of what we have here set forth there should be no difficulty in understanding the following two verses:

- 1/ *You may not guide whomsoever you like, but Allah guides whom He wills (28 : 56).*
- 2/ *And You (O Prophet), surely you shall guide unto a straight path (32 : 52.)*

Then the Prophet, upon whom be peace, has been made a source of guidance, and the *Shaitan* a source of deviation. But, at the root of things, all of these matters come about by the will of *Allah*, and *Allah* is the Guide and the Lord of Success!

41. **The torment of the grave for the disbeliever and sinner, the bestowing of ease upon the obedient believers – in a way known to Allah and by His Will – and the questioning by Munkar and Nakeer; all of these things are truth**

وعذاب القبر للكافر والفاسق، ونعمان أهل الطاعة بما يعلم الله
ويريده، وسؤال منكر ونكير حق

Among the beliefs held to by the *Sunni* Orthodoxy is the torment of the grave. The meaning of the grave is much wider than that ordinarily used, and here it is used to denote the world of *Barzakh* i.e. interspace or the interval between death and final resurrection on judgement day. In that inbetween-world of the grave the unbelievers and the sinners from among the Muslims will be tormented each in accordance with Allah's will and in ways known only to Him. For the obedient believers, however, the world of *Barzakh* will be one of ease.

Munkar and *Nakeer* are two huge, black, terrible, blue-eyed angels who enter the graves of men (i.e. who come to them in the world of *Barzakh* regardless of where they might be) and ask them questions about their Lord, their

Prophet and their religion. If, by the guidance of Allah, the Generous, a satisfactory answer be given them, they will open the door of ease and relaxation. Then the believer will rest like a newly wed and his grave will become a garden among the gardens of Paradise. If a satisfactory answer is not forthcoming, the grave's occupant will undergo torment and affliction. His grave will become a ditch among the ditches of Hell.

Since the *Quran* and *Hadith* contain reference to this we must believe in its truth and entrust the why and wherefore to Allah, exalted be His Glory. Is the torment accomplished by re-animating the body? Or given directly to the soul? Or by some other method known only to the All Powerful? We have no knowledge of these things.

According to some scholars, *Munkar* and *Nakeer* are the names of the angels who visit the graves of the wrongdoers. The names of the angels who visit the graves of the believers are *Mubashir* and *Basheer*. However, this opinion is not widely accepted because there is very little evidence for it in the traditions. Another possibility is that there are two groups of angels, one called *Munkar* and one called *Nakeer*, and that every grave is visited by an angel from each group. Still another possibility is that there are two angels who appear in a number of different places at the same time by means of some sort of image projection; . but Allah knows best.

Bazaazi, the author of the *Khulaasah* has written in his *Fataawa* that the dead are not questioned before they enter their graves. Then, the one placed in a coffin for transport to another location will not be questioned until he reaches his destination. Yet, if some one should fall victim to a carnivore and then be devoured by him, that person will be questioned while still in the stomach of the carnivore.

According to the most creditable of opinions, the Prophets, upon whom be peace, are not subjected to questioning. If they were questioned it will have been about the *unity* of Allah and the condition of the believing community. Concerning the children of the believers there is a difference of opinion. Most are of the opinion that they will be questioned, but that the angels after questioning them will prompt them so that they will be able to give the right answers; for example, by saying to them "Say, Allah is my Lord and Islam is my religion and Muhammad, upon whom be peace, is my Prophet." Moreover, it is possible that Allah will inspire them to give the right answers, just as He inspired the Prophet Jesus, upon whom be peace, to speak while in the cradle.

Concerning the questioning of the unbeliever's children, *Imam Abu Hanifahh* has suspended venturing an opinion because of conflicting evidence. Concerning their reward or punishment he has done likewise. According to some, they will be cast into hell, while others say they will enter Paradise. *Muhammad Ibne Husain* said, "I am certain that *Allah* would never punish anyone who was free of sin."

The *Jinn* will also be questioned. This can be inferred from the general nature of the textual evidence, as it encompasses the questioning of both men and *Jinn*. *Imam Abu Hanifahh* has again withheld his opinion on the question of believing *Jinn* and eternal rewards, though there is general agreement that unbelieving *Jinn* will be eternally tormented. *Ibne Abdul Barr* has written that the unbeliever who openly admitted his lack of faith will be given his punishment without being questioned; however, the hypocrite will be questioned. Certain commentators have written that the following will not be questioned:

1. The *Shaheed* (the soldier of *Allah* who sacrifices his life in Holy War);
2. The Borderguard or soldier of *Allah* who dies while on duty guarding the homeland of Islam;
3. The Muslim who dies on the day or night of *Jum'ah*;
4. The Muslim who reads *Sura Mulk* every night before going to sleep.

These exceptions are based on a number of traditions.

Imam Tirmizi and *Ibne Abdul Barr* have said that one of the special attributes of this (*Muslim*) religious community is the questioning in the grave. They point out that the wisdom in hastening the torment of the believing sinners in Barzakh is that when the day of Judgement comes they will already have been cleansed of their sins. This is mentioned in the commentary of *Aqeeda Tahaawi* as well.

The traditions speak of there being in the grave of every sinner seventy scorpions, and dragons such that if one of them was to come into this world his breathing would reduce the forests of earth to ashes. The true nature of these serpents is that they are the representations of evil traits, foul deeds, and worldly concerns cast in the form of scorpions and dragons. The number seventy has been mentioned either as an expression of abundance or a totaling of the foundations of character. Whoever committed every kind of indecency and cultivated within himself every kind of evil trait will find the full seventy in his grave; and whoever committed fewer sins and whose character was freer of evil will find fewer serpents.

With regard to our faith in this and similar matters which have reached us concerning the next world, when

authentically based on the authority of the Prophet, upon whom be peace, two roads lie open before us. One is to consider the scorpions and dragons and their various torments as occurring in the real sense but beyond our power to witness. This is because, with the exception of the Prophets, upon whom be peace, and some of the companions and *Sufi* masters, very few have been endowed in this world with the ability to peer into the spirit world of *Malakoot*. Besides the Prophet Muhammad, upon whom be peace, and a few others chosen by Allah, no one has seen the angel Jibra'il. All of this is through the grace and power of Allah. A man with open eyes could not see a mountain directly in front of him if that was the will of Allah. If He were to will it, then surely a man could look into the spirit world. This is the first of two ways. Along this road faith is tested, beliefs are authenticated, and traditions are adhered to. The second way, less esteemed than the first, is to believe that these serpents come to the grave's occupant as in a nightmare where the sleeper undergoes its horror to the exclusion of everyone else. Though the same result can be obtained through the way of interpretation, it is clearly the least desirable of the two. Surely, *Allah* is the Lord of Success.

42. The Resurrection is truth

والبعث حق

The truth of Allah's raising the dead from their graves and His re-animating all creation is established throughout the *Quran* and *Hadith* of the Prophet, upon whom be peace. The religion of Islam revolves on this one article of faith. The Divine Being who first created from nothing, and who brought the entire universe into existence, is undoubtedly able to once again give life to the dead, and return them to their former existence.

And He it who originates creation and then brings it back again, and that were even easier for Him (27 : 30).

4

Man's seed, the factor behind his birth and growth, figuratively called in Arabic, (الذنب) the backbone, will mix with and remain hidden within the earth. Then, in the same way that the grass seed buried in the earth commences growing all at once with the coming of the rains, all men and creation will spring forth once again.

The Traditions inform us that on Judgement Day it will rain a month's rain and, as a result, men, beasts, birds, serpents, in short, all of creation will be returned to life. Then, Allah will preside over creation's taking retribution among themselves. The *Imams Muslim* and *Ahmad Ibne Hanbal* have related a Hadith of the Prophet, upon whom be peace, in which it is stated that on the Day of Judgement all of creation will engage in the taking of retribution; even to the horned sheep which gored a hornless one, and the ant which for no reason caused another ant to grieve. When retribution is to be taken from the legally incompetent and undiscerning beasts, some scholars have reasoned that children will join in taking retribution as well. After taking retribution among themselves, the beasts will pass on to oblivion; except, it is said, those slaughtered for food in their first lifetimes, as they will be transformed to make the grass of Paradise.

The world's destruction and revival, and the calling forth of the dead from their graves, all of these things will be announced by a blast from a horn. The first blast will be given at the beginning of Judgement Day, striking all the inhabitants of the earth and skies with amazement and terror. Then there will come the annihilation of all living things.

"On the day the trumpet is blown, and terrified is whosoever is in the heavens and earth, excepting whom Allah wills" (27 : 87).

"For the trumpet shall be blown, and whosoever is in the heavens and whosoever is in the earth shall swoon, save whom Allah wills" (39 : 68).

The second blast will call the dead forth from their resting places that they might assemble on the plain of *Mahshar* for judgement.

"Then it shall be blown again, and to they shall stand beholding" (39 : 68).

And the trumpet shall be blown; then behold, they are sliding down from their tombs unto their Lord! (36:51).

Because the word (وَمَا) whosoever, in the verse "whosoever is in the heavens and whosoever is in the earth", is general, it is inclusive of all the earth's and heaven's inhabitants; of men, *Jinn* and angels. The exception in the verse, "save whom Allah wills," includes *Jibra'il*, *Mika'il*, *Isra'fil*, *Izra'il*, the *Houris* of Paradise, the guards to the gates of Paradise, the bearers of the throne and the martyrs. These will remain awake. The standing for Judgement, *Qiyaama*, is the name given sometimes to that time following the second blast, and sometimes to that following the first as well.

Actually, when you consider it, mankind goes through something like this every day; and yet we remain inattentive and negligent of the teachings of the Prophet, upon whom be peace. Night is the time of gloom, uncertainty and dread for man and beast alike. It is the time

when we disappear into our huts, caves, dens, and burrows. Then there is sleep. This resembles the state of the world after the first blast. When morning comes the world is suddenly awakened, and man and beast begin to go their separate ways. This is an example from our daily lives of what occurs after the second blast. Glory be to Him Who gives life and takes it away! And unto Him all things return!

43. The Balance is Truth والوزن حق

The weighing and balancing the deeds of mankind on the Day of Judgement are truth. Though the wisdom therein, in its entirety, can only be perceived by the Almighty, yet we can discern in this weighing the wisdom of letting the individual see for himself the weight of his actions through the tilting of the scales. *Allah* knows best what other wisdom herein obtains. It is enough that we believe and entrust the rest to the knowledge of the Almighty.

The weighing referred to will be a weighing in the real sense, with a pair of scales, two trays and a beam. The capacity of each tray will be greater than that of the heavens and earth combined. *Salmaan Farsi*, a companion to the Prophet, upon whom be peace, related that the trays of the scale would easily hold the heavens and earth and everything therein contained. The tray for holding the good deeds will be to the right of the Throne, facing Paradise; and the tray of evil deeds on the left, facing Hell.

According to some scholars, the scales should be taken figuratively to mean some sort of aid in ascertaining the deeds of mankind. Whatever the case, the purpose is justice and the scales are its symbol. This is the way that some scholars look at it. However, the best way to approach the

matter is to take it literally by believing that the scales as they have been described in the traditions are real, and not to subject faith to the duplicity of reason.

As for that which is to be weighed; it might either be deeds transformed by the Almighty to bodies of light, for good deeds, and of darkness in the case of evil deeds; or it might be the books in which the deeds of every person have been recorded. This second possibility is supported by a *Hadith* known to the traditionists as the "*Hadith ul Bitaaqa*." *Bitaaqa* is an Arabic word meaning a slip of paper on which the price of merchandise is written. The meaning here is that if someone's good deeds are too light to move the scales, then the words.

"*There is no God except Allah and Muhammad is His Prophet*", would be written on a *Bitaaqa* and tossed onto the scales, causing them to tilt in his favour. Another meaning is that the *Bitaaqa* is the book of deeds. Some scholars have joined the two by saying that both the embodied deeds and the books of deeds will be weighed.

Allah, the Exalted has said,

"*We shall set up the just balances for the Resurrection Day*" (21 : 47).

Here the plural (balances) has been used either because there will be a number of different scales, for example one for each religious community, for each person, or for each kind of deed; or because there will be a number of different weights; or because of the magnitude of the parts of the one set of scales.

The purpose of weighing the deeds of those who have no sins and of those who have no acts of devotion is to declare the nobility and honour of the one group, and to

disclose the shame and disobedience of the other. The weighing of the disbelievers' deeds will be done for the same purpose, because they have no acts of devotion. It is possible, however, that the good deeds of disbelievers could serve to lessen their torment.

44. The Book of Deeds is truth والكتاب حق

The book containing the records of mankind's good and bad deeds is truth. The believers will be given their books in their right hands, and the unbelievers will be given theirs in their left hands, from behind their backs. All of this will be done so that the believers may be distinguished from the unbelievers, and to contrast the honour of the believers to the disgrace of the disbelievers.

There is a difference of opinion, however, with regard to the disobedient believers. Some say that they will receive their books in their right hands, but only after they have taken their punishment and been released from the Fire. According to others, they will be given their books in their right hands but will be unable to read them until after they have received their punishment. Another opinion has it that they will receive their books on neither the right nor the left, but directly in front. Still another opinion is that they will not be given their books at all, but that their contents will be read out to them. The truth of the matter is that there is no documentary evidence concerning the state of the disobedient believers. Then, the opinions voiced in these last few lines have all been based on deductions and independent judgement drawn from general principles; but *Allah* knows best.

45. The reckoning is truth

والحساب حق

The purpose behind the book (of deeds) is reckoning. Then, when the book is truth, it follows that the reckoning is also truth.

46. The questioning is truth والسؤال حق

Allah's questioning His subjects about what they have done in the world – what acts of devotion and what of disobedience? – all this is truth. The angels will also be subjected to this questioning. It is related in the traditions that, first of all, *Jibra'il* will be questioned as to how he performed the duty of bringing the revelation (*Wahy*) to the Prophets, upon whom be peace.

In some traditions the first to be questioned will be the Sacred Tablet (*al-Lauh ul-Mahfooz*). When it is brought before *Allah*, The Most Exalted, the tablet will begin to quiver. The command will be given,

"O Tablet, tell me who witnessed your passing of knowledge on to Jibra'il?"

It will answer,

"My witness is Isra'fil."

Then *Isra'fil* will be brought forward, also quaking and quivering in awe of the Majesty of the Almighty, Allah. Then, the Prophets will be brought forward and questioned as to how they performed the duties of Prophethood.

The first question asked of men with regard to worship (the relation of man to his Lord) will have to do with prayer, and the first question asked with regard to transactions (the relation of man to his fellowmen) will have to do with bloodshed (murder etc.) Furthermore, the

good deeds of the oppressor will pass on to the oppressed, and the evil done by the oppressed will be held against the oppressor. One tradition records that seven hundred prayers will not equal a dram's weight of something gained unjustly. It is also related that supposing a man had accumulated for himself the blessings of seventy Prophets, if he is found owing someone half a dram he will not be allowed to enter Paradise until he has paid his debt.

Even with the prospect of such an exacting and dreadful day confronting him, man continues in his quotidian complacency, thinking himself secure and enlightened. Indeed, the common man has become neglectful, the scholars are busy discussing and researching, and the Sufis are either boasting or raving. The truth is that most people know little or nothing about the next world. Most people, in fact, rarely stop to think about tomorrow. Rather, we busy ourselves with trivialities and never once consider death or the next world.

Indeed, we are Allah's; and indeed, we shall return to Him!

Consider the mercy of our Lord, how He satisfies those claimants. From afar He grants them a glimpse of Paradise and asks them who will buy it. They will reply,

"O Lord, who could buy Paradise? Who could meet its price?"

The reply will come,

"You can buy it, the price is in your hands. The debt for which your Muslim brother is responsible; forgive him and clear him of it. If you do, Allah shall grant you Paradise for it."

Then the claimant will be satisfied and forgive his brother.

The traditions record that at the time of questioning the Muslims will be veiled by the mercy and forgiveness of Allah – be He Exalted – and questioned in such a way so as not to disclose their identities to the others. To them He will say,

"In the same way that I mercifully concealed your misdeeds in your worldly life time, I forgive them today."

Then He will give them their books. But the unbelievers and the hypocrites will be humiliated. The call will go out.

"Beware! The curse of Allah be upon the unjust!"

Glory be to the Just, the Powerful, the One of Exceeding Grace; though none can deny His mercy, yet all must fear His justice.

A Persian Couplet:

*If the call went out giving tidings of His Grace.
Even Satan would say, "I'll take my place."*

Another Persian Couplet:

*When the sword of Justice is drawn from its Sheath.
Not even the angels will dare draw a breath.*

Indeed the Almighty Himself declared;

*"Surely Allah's friends, no fear shall be on them,
neither shall they sorrow" (10 : 62).*

And in another;

"He shall not be questioned as to what He does, but they shall be questioned." (23 : 21).

We possess nothing but our weakness, awe and limitations; we place our faith in His justice and mercy both.... And Allah is Powerful over everything.

47. The reservoir is truth والخوض حق

Allah Most High has promised to give the Chief of the Prophets, Muhammad, upon whom be peace everlasting, the reservoir of *Kauthar* on the Day of Judgement. That is the meaning of the following verse:

"Surely We have granted you Kauthar" (108 : 1).

The length of this reservoir is equivalent to a month's journey, its waters are whiter than milk, its fragrance is more aromatic than musk, and its taste is sweeter than nectar. The drinking cups arranged around it are more numerous and more sparkling than the stars in the sky. Whoever drinks of its waters will never thirst again.

In the traditions a number of different dimensions for the reservoir of *Kauthar* are given. These differences revert to the general rule that the circumstances of whoever was being addressed were considered whenever the dimensions of *Kauthar* were mentioned. For example, the Yemenites were told that its length was like the distance from *Saana* to *Aden*. Likewise, the distances were explained to the Syrians in terms that they were familiar with; and so on, each according to his experience and surroundings. Some *Hadith* explain its dimensions in terms of time. Obviously,

then, it is the intention of all these traditions merely to emphasise the great dimensions and capacity of *al-Kauthar*.

Some say that there is a reservoir for every Prophet and that its size depends upon his rank among the Prophets. Al-Qurtabi says that there are two reservoirs for the Prophet Muhammad, upon whom be peace, both called Kauthar.

The *Khalifah Ali Ibne Abi Talib*, will be the cup-bearer at the reservoir of *Kauthar*. Those who have little love for him and little thirst for meeting him will have a hard time on that day getting a drink. Other *Hadith* have come to us on *Ali's* authority in which he mentions that the person who has no love for *Abu Bakr*, "will not get a drop from me."

48. The Siraat is truth والصراط حق

The Lord Almighty, on the Day of Judgement, will cause a bridge, *Siraat*, to span over Hell. This bridge will be no wider than a hair and will be sharper than the blade of a sword. The Command will be given for all creation to cross over the bridge to Paradise or, in the attempt, to fall into Hell below. Some will flash across like lightning, some will blow across like a breeze, still others will charge across like war horses. In short, each person will cross in a way reflecting his position in faith and justice. But the unbelievers will quake with fear and fall from the bridge into the waiting depths of Hell.

It is written in the *Quran Majid*:

"*Not one of you there is but he shall cross over it*"
(19 : 71).

Then, the order to cross the bridge will be a general order. All of creation including the Prophets and their

Chief, the Pride of the Prophets, Muhammad, upon whom be peace, will pass over the *Siraat*.

Certain scholars have suggested that the wisdom in the Prophet's passing over the *Siraat* will be to punish those disobedient believers who have fallen from the bridge by presenting them with a picture of perfect beauty and glory when he crosses over so that they will think back in bitter melancholy to the days they spent so foolishly in negligence and wrongdoing.

In a tradition going back to *Abdullah Ibne Abbas*, he states that his opinion concerning this verse is that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, will be excepted from this general order, and will witness the crossing of all creation from a distance. Certainly this is quite likely. If the Prophet, upon whom be peace, crossed over the Fire, it would turn into a garden. Indeed when the Prophet, upon whom be peace, approached the Fire it would cry out, "Go quickly believer! Your light is drowning my flames!"

The Prophet's light, when projected onto the forehead of *Ibrahim*, upon whom be peace, cooled the flames of his tormentor's fire. Then, when the Prophet himself, upon whom be peace, comes before the Fire in person, what effect can it possibly have on him?

49. The intercession is truth والشفاعة حق

The intercession of the Prophets, the saints, the devout, the scholars and the angels, owing to their influence and standing at the court of the Almighty, on behalf of the disobedient believers is truth. The door of intercession will first be opened to the Prophet Muhammad, upon whom be peace, owing to his position of utmost grandeur and

manifest preeminence. The day will be his day, and the honour, his honour.

"O Lord! Through the offices of Muhammad, grant me forgiveness!"

When all of creation is assembled on the plain of *Mahshar* for judgement, they will seek release from the terror and confusion of that day by calling for a an intercessor. First the Prophet *Adam*, upon whom be peace, will be petitioned. They will say to him, "You are *Adam*, the father of mankind, whom Allah created by His hand, whom He caused to dwell in His garden, to whom He made the angels bow down, and whom He taught the names of everything. Intercede for us with your Lord, so that He may relieve us on this, our day of difficulty."

Adam, upon whom be peace, will reply,

"It is not for me even to stand and breathe the air of that (i.e. intercession's) station of praise. When I ate of the forbidden tree, I trod the way of error with regard to the Divine Command and I am ashamed even now. Perhaps the Prophet *Nuh*, upon whom be peace, can help you."

Then the people will go to *Nuh*, upon whom be peace, and he, after excusing himself, will suggest that they go to *Ibrahim*. Then *Ibrahim*, upon whom be peace, will send them to *Musa*, upon whom be peace, and *Musa*, upon whom be peace, will send them to *Isa, Jesus*, upon whom be peace. *Likewise*, all the Prophets, upon whom be peace, will be approached and will excuse themselves.

Finally no one will be able to put a foot forward until Muhammad, The Seal of the Prophets, the Intercessor of

the Day of *Mahshar*, of whom it has been written for eternity,

"That Allah may forgive you your former and your latter faults" (48 : 2).

presents himself and, after listening to their petition, stands at the Court of Majesty and Glory. There he will take his position at the promised 'Station of Praise':

"Soon your Lord will raise you up to a Station of Praise" (17 : 79).

Besides him no one will be able to stand there. Then he will prostrate himself to Allah. When the Command is given to 'raise your head and seek what you would seek,' he will raise up and praise Allah in words the Almighty himself will have taught him, thus absolving a part of his following of their sins. Then he will make a second prostration and, by the Lord's command, will raise his head and again praise Him, thus absolving another part of his following of their sins. A third time he will prostrate himself, raise his head at the Lord's command, and praise Him, thus absolving the remainder of his following of their sins. However, those who were threatened in the *Quran* with the Eternal Fire for their denying and unbelief will remain prisoners of the flames of Hell.

We know through an authentic *Hadith* related by the *Imams Bukhari* and *Muslim* that everyone's sins will be forgiven due to the intercession of the Prophet, and that in the case of his followers no one else's intercession will be necessary. However, it is possible that others will have need of the Prophet's, upon whom be peace, intercession, and that he will intercede for them at the court of the Almighty. Another *Hadith* has it that after the intercession

of the Prophet Muhammad, upon whom be peace, only those will remain in Hell who never performed a good deed or an act of devotion besides saying: "*There is no God but Allah.*" Then the Prophet, upon whom be peace, will intercede for them. The Lord of Glory will declare,

"O Muhammad! These people are Our special domain and We set them free of Our own accord."

Then they will be allowed to leave the flames of the Fire.

To sum up, The Day of Intercession will be Muhammad's day, the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, the station, the position, the words – all will be his and his only. On that day he, upon whom be peace, will be the guest of Allah.

"Your Lord shall give you, and you shall be satisfied"
(93 :5).

"O Muhammad, my favourite, my special slave, soon I will grant your wish and give you of my mercy so that nothing remains in your heart unfulfilled. Muhammad, everyone is seeking My pleasure, and it is My will that I please you."

The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, will say,

"I cannot be happy until all of my Ummah has been forgiven."

It is said that this verse,

"Do not despair of Allah's Mercy, Surely Allah forgives sins altogether" (53 : 39).

was revealed especially in connection with this *Ummah*. A second verse,

"And He will forgive you of your sins" (71 : 4).
refers to the Ummah of the Prophet *Nuh (Noah)*.

According to the rules of Arabic grammar, the word (of) is used here to indicate a part of a whole so that the verse's meaning is that some of your sins will be forgiven. Then, it is the Ummah of Muhammad, may Allah bless him, which Allah has most favoured with His Grace:

"A people sinning and a Lord forgiving."

When the guest is honoured, then the one who accompanies him, without himself being invited, is also honoured.

Then be a true member of the *Ummah* of Muhammad, upon whom be peace and blessings, and everything will go easy with you. The difficulty comes when you fail to establish a spiritual relationship, with the Prophet, upon whom be peace. If yours is a true relationship, then you have no problems; with the light of faith in the Prophet, upon whom be peace, the burden of a thousand sins will become as light as a blade of grass. With the light of faith burning within your heart there can be no place for the shadows of sin. Take care of your faith, then, and make it right.

Sufian Thaury used to cry all night long. Once he was asked why he cried so much when he should have been happy that he was free of the burden of sin. He replied that even if he had a mountain of sins they could easily be reduced to dust by the Mercy of the Lord. This crying, he

explained, was because he could not be sure if his faith would remain secure in this world or not.

On the subject of intercession a few more matters remain to be discussed. Intercession will not take place once but several times. The first will be at the site of the last Judgement called the plain of *Mahshar* – a place of terror and severity. There intercession will be sought for the easing of its rigors. The second intercession will take place before the questioning and reckoning so that these may go smoothly and without dispute. It is related in the traditions, that a person concerning whose reckoning a dispute arises can be sure that he is to be punished. The third intercession will take place at the time of the command for the carrying out of punishment. Then the forgiving of sins and the staying of punishment will be sought. The fourth will be at the pits of Hell so that sins may be forgiven and believers taken from the flames. The fifth will be in Paradise so that the positions of the faithful may be elevated and their blessings increased.

Intercession is comparable to someone's speaking on behalf of the accused at a royal court in order that his questioning be done without severity, and at the time of judgement again speaking on the accused's behalf in order that his sentence be stayed or the punishment reduced.

Then, every sinful believer should have hope that he will benefit from the intercession of the Prophet Muhammad, upon whom be peace. Should Allah will it, he will gain release from the Fire and be given a fine place in Paradise.

The Prophet's intercession, may Allah bless him and give him peace, will be on behalf of the entire *Ummah*, and even of all creation. Special intercession, however will also

be made, for example, on behalf of the inhabitants of Madinah, or those who visited his tomb, or those who were in the habit of reciting *Darood Shareef* or praying for the
5 Prophet, upon whom be peace.

According to the scholars, the origin of this intercession will be reflection of the light of Allah's mercy. From the court of the Almighty this light will be beamed on to the heart of the Prophet, upon whom be peace. Then those whom hearts are aligned with his heart will receive its reflection. The sun's rays, for example, when cast onto the waters of a pool will be reflected onto a nearby wall, if the wall is facing the water. But if the wall is not properly aligned with the pool, the rays will not reflect onto it.

The alignment of the heart of a Muslim with the Prophet of Allah, upon whom be peace, is accomplished through its inclination and attention to him and his ways. The surest way of aligning the heart with the Prophet, upon whom be peace, is by following his *Sunnah* (way). The more closely the *Sunnah* is adhered to, the more the heart will receive of that reflection. This has to do with the elevation of position in Paradise; otherwise the condition for intercession regarding forgiveness of sins and staying off punishment is simply that one have faith.

The most effective way of obtaining his, upon whom be peace, intercession is by reciting a *Darood Shareef* such as the following:

"May Allah bless and keep him, his family, and his companions; day and night, openly and secretly, whenever the mindful remember him, and whenever the neglectful neglect his remembrance!"

And Allah is the Lord of Success!

50. Paradise and the Fire are truth.

والجنة حق والنار حق

Paradise and the Fire, in the way that they have been described in the *Quran* and *Hadith*, are truth. There are differing opinions as to their whereabouts. Some say that Paradise is in the sky, or in the fourth heaven, or beyond the seventh heaven, and that the Fire is deep within the earth or in the heavens. One group has considered it better not to speculate, and instead to entrust the exact location of both places to the knowledge of Allah be He Exalted.

In the *Shark-ul-Maqaasid* it is written that no clear evidence has come to us concerning their locations, but that most scholars are agreed that Paradise is in the skies, and that the Fire is below the earth. However, there is some difficulty in this popular belief when viewed in the light of the following Quranic verse;

"A Garden the breadth of which is the heavens and earth" (3 : 133).

Because it is clearly impossible for Paradise to have a set location within the heavens and earth and, at the same time, be equally as capacious; especially when the garden mentioned in the verse could refer either to Paradise as a whole or to the garden of just one of its inhabitants. The commentaries of the *Quran* contain a number of answers to this question.

However, the best of all these answers is to say that since the vastest things imaginable to the majority of mankind are the heavens and earth, they have been presented here figuratively in illustration of the staggering magnitude of the dimensions of Paradise, and not as exact

measurements or by way of delimitation. It is said that the smallest house in Paradise will be ten times the size of the earth. In truth, no one besides Allah knows their true dimensions; and Allah knows best.

Al-A'raaf (The Heights) is the name given to the place said to be between Paradise and Hell wherein there is neither the comfort and ease of Paradise, nor the torment and pain of Hell. However, its existence has not been established conclusively by indisputable, documentary proof from the *Quran* or the *Hadith*. *Imam Taqiyy-ud-Din Subki* has stated that there is no mention of such a place in the entire body of *Hadith* literature.

The Quranic verse;

"*And on the Heights are men knowing each by their mark*" (7 : 46).

is said to refer to the veil of walls and ramparts that separate Paradise from Hell. The men referred to are Prophet's, martyrs, pious, scholars and angels who will recognize those bound for Hell by the markings on their foreheads; but Allah knows best.

51. Both are created, present

وَمَا مُخْلِقُهُنَّ مُوجُودُهُنَّ

Both Paradise and the Fire have been created and are at present in existence. The story of *Adam*, upon whom be peace, gives ample evidence that their creation is not something that will occur for the first time on the Day of Judgement.

52. Eternal and imperishable; nor will their inhabitants ever perish

باقستان لأنفسيان ولا يفني أهلها

Paradise, the Fire, and all those who dwell therein will remain forever; never to perish. When all of their inhabitants have already died one death, they will be resurrected and then they will live on forever. No one will ever die in either of these two places.

53. Everything the Prophet, upon whom be peace, reported about the conditions (for the occurrence) of the Last Day and the state of the next world is truth

وكل ما أخبر به النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم

من أشراف الساعة وأحوال الآخرة حق

Whatever the Prophet, may Allah bless him and give him peace, has informed us of concerning the signs of the last day; for example the sun's rising in the West on the day that the door of repentance is closed, the coming of the *Dajjal* and the beasts of the earth, the second coming of Jesus, upon whom be peace, the blast of the horn, and so on is truth. Besides this all of the events from the Judgement Day until the entry into either Paradise or the fire, moreover everything concerning which he informed us, or ordered us to do or not to do in the *Shariah*, all of these things are true. This is only a brief explanation; details can be sought from the books of *Usul ul Hadith*.

Translator's Note:

A more thorough explanation is needed here because, while we must accept the words of the Prophet, upon whom be peace, as truth, we have first to discern just which words of the millions attributed to him are really accurate accounts of what he said. This is why the author, *Shaykh Abdul Haqq* has mentioned the science of *Usul ul Hadith*.

Essentially, a tradition may or may not be authentic. However, the scholars have devised extensive and elaborate methods for gauging their authenticity. Once a *Hadith* is classified as authentic, we must believe in the truth of what it says; however, its meaning may or may not be apparent. Then, while it is necessary to believe every thing the Prophet, upon whom be peace, informed us of, we can only be sure of what has been authenticated by the traditional scholars (*Muhadditheen*). Secondly, since the meaning of not every *Hadith* is clear, we are responsible only for what we can understand; while having faith that whatever it was we did not understand is in itself truth.

The question of the meaning of the *Hadith* has also been attended to, both past and present, by the traditional scholars and the legalists (*Fuqahaa*). They have devised a series of most thorough and ingenious methods for examining the texts of the traditions so that the greatest amount of benefit can be had there from, and so that the Muslim community may continue to find guidance through the ages from the words and deeds of the Last of the Prophets, peace and blessings be upon him. May Allah reward them for their efforts with success and the Abode of Peace! (trans).

54. Faith is believing in the heart and acknowledging with the tongue

الإيمان تصديق بالقلب واقرار باللسان

Faith is true belief in Allah and his Prophet, upon whom be peace, and submission and acceptance of both with the heart, while acknowledging with the tongue and giving witness to all of that. Actually, faith is no more than the believing with the heart; the acknowledging is just a way of indicating true belief within the heart so that the outward aspect of religion, the *Shariah*, may be put into

effect with regard to the one giving witness. The tongue is the heart's translator. Then, in the case of the believer who is mute, or who is forced against his will to utter words indicating unbelief, or who believed but never had an opportunity to make his faith known to others, in all of these cases, since their hearts are full of belief, the acknowledgement with the tongue is not a condition for the validity of their faith.

According to the traditionists (*Muhadditheen*), 'Faith is to believe with the heart, acknowledge with the tongue and act with the limbs,' i.e. perform acts of devotion. In truth there is no difference between the two definitions. Complete faith is that which the *Muhadditheen* have defined because faith without works is clearly incomplete. However, the essential factor or root of faith is to truly believe with the heart. Faith can be pictured as a tree where the belief with the heart is represented by its trunk, and where works and acts of worship are represented by its fruits that are in truth no more than the results of that inner belief. The tree which bears no fruit is also called a tree. However, the tree of value is that which bears fruit. Thus, complete faith is comparable to the fruit bearing tree, and incomplete faith to the barren tree; though both are called faith.

Allah - be He Exalted - in most places in the Holy *Quran* has linked the two characteristics;

"*Surely those who believe and do good work.....*" (see, for example, 85:11, 95:6, 98:7, 103:3, 10:4, 13:24, 29:58 etc.) (trans.)

It is apparent from this verse and others like it that the essential factor of faith is the inner belief and that works, while separate, serve to complete this faith. For example, if

we say that a certain person has this thing and also has that thing, then it will be understood that he possesses both things and that they are separate from one another. It would not be correct to say that the two things are actually one.

Furthermore, it is not enough to simply know that Muhammad, the Prophet, the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, was a true Prophet and leave it at that; without truly believing. Belief and knowledge are two different matters. Belief is a matter of submission and acceptance. In Persian, for example, the term to embrace is used as it implies the heart's being tinted by the colour of faith and illuminated by the light of certainty. Knowledge is no more than cognisance. All of the idolatrous Arabs, and likewise the Jews knew Muhammad, upon whom be peace, to be the true Prophet. He was as familiar to them as their own children who had been born in their houses and lived with them all their lives. It is this matter to which Allah refers in the Holy *Quran*;

"And they recognise him as they recognise their own sons" (2 : 146).

The coming of the Last of the Prophets, upon whom be peace, his description, his manners, character, name, place of birth; all of these things were written in the Jewish scriptures and often made the subject of their conversation. From the time of the Prophet *Musa*, upon whom be peace, to the coming of the Last of the Prophets, the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, a great number of Jews immigrated to *Madinah* with the intention of living long enough to be able to declare their faith in Muhammad, upon whom be peace, when he came. These people spent their entire lifetimes driven only by their faith and hope; and finally, when they died, they charged their children, if their children were fortunate enough to live that long, with

delivering their greetings (*Salaam*) to the new and long-awaited Prophet, upon whom be peace, and declaring their faith in him in their stead.

In truth, no one knew more about his, upon whom be peace, coming than the Jews. But when the Sun of Prophethood appeared on the horizon (but of Arab descent rather than Jewish, of the children of *Isma'il* rather than *Isra'il*; when all are, in fact, the children of *Ibrahim*) most of the Jews reverted to their natural insolence, and their minds eye grew bat-like beneath the veils of envy and obstinacy so that fell into the pits of denial and disbelief and prevented themselves from treading the way to success.

From here we can see that knowledge and intelligence, without the providence and guidance of Allah, the compassionate, are in themselves useless and of no benefit to any one.

"And they denied it, though their souls acknowledged it, wrongfully and out of pride" (27 : 14).

I seek refuge in Allah from knowledge that is not useful, and hearts that are not humble.

55. Faith neither increases nor decreases

وهو لا يزيد ولا ينقص

It has already been established that essentially faith is inner belief. When it is clear that the heart is one and does not multiply, it should be equally as clear that faith likewise neither increases nor decreases. If works were also to be included in the definition of faith, then, as a result of their surplus or deficiency, faith could be said to increase or decrease. However, since faith is inner belief, and not

works, then the opinion of the *Imam of Kufah*, *Abu Hanifahh*, may Allah bless him, that

"Faith neither increases nor decreases,"

should not present any doubts or difficulties to anyone. Actually this is no more than a way of indicating that faith and works are two separate matters. This is the doctrine of *Sunni* Muslims; and Allah is the Lord of Success.

56. Faith and Islam are one

وَالْإِيمَانُ وَالْاسْلَامُ وَاحِدٌ

Faith is usually understood to denote belief and the inner condition, while Islam is understood to refer to submission and the outer condition. In the light of this explanation, the meaning of the following verse should become apparent;

The Beduins say,

"We believe." Say; "You do not believe, rather say, 'We submit'; for belief has not yet entered your hearts." (49 : 14).

Generally speaking, however, every believer (*Mu'min*) is a submitter (*Muslim*), and every Muslim a *Mu'min*. There should be no difference between the two.

57. No one should say; "I am a believer if Allah wills"

وَلَا يَنْبَغِي لَأَحَدٍ أَنْ يَقُولَ: أَنَا مُؤْمِنٌ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى

The scholars have differed among themselves concerning the person who says, "I am a believer if Allah wills (*Insha' Allah*)."¹ The *Hanafi* scholars consider it

impermissible, whereas the *Shafites* have considered it permissible.

The truth is that there is no difference of opinion at all. If one's exclaiming, "If Allah wills," is due to doubt or uncertainty, then it is not permissible because doubt and uncertainty are the opposites of conviction and certainty; and those are the essentials of faith. If, on the other hand, one makes the declaration in Allah's name hoping to gain blessings and success, or in order to ward off self-admiration and presumption, or to purify one's inner being, or out of uncertainty as to whether or not one could ever attain to the perfect faith spoken of the *Quran*;

'Those, in truth, are the believers!' (8 : 74).

Then, in all the above cases, it would be permissible to say, 'If Allah wills,'

Nonetheless, it is perhaps more prudent not to use such words so that, on the surface of things at least, the tongue remains free of words which might be understood as implying doubt.

58. Agony's faith is unacceptable

رایحان الیاس غیر مقبول

Literally, the word *Bas* (translated here as Agony) means severity and torment. However, the agony of the death throes is what is intended here, as that is the time when a person gets his first glimpse into the next world. It is related in the traditions that at the time of death everyone will be given a glimpse of his abode in either Paradise or Hell. Then, if an unbeliever should choose such a (last) moment to believe, his faith will not be accepted. This is because faith is a matter of belief in the Unseen (*al-Ghaib*),

and of submitting to the Creator and obeying Him. However, at the time of death nothing remains unseen, so one has no option but to believe; whether he is willing or unwilling, the facts force him to believe.

On the day of Judgement the unbelievers will cry,

"Our Lord, we have seen and heard; now return us that we may do righteousness, for we have sure faith"
(12 : 32).

But their believing and acknowledging at such a time will not avail them in the least.

The entire community of scholars is agreed that agony's faith is unacceptable. It is related in the traditions:

"Allah, be He Exalted, will accept the repentance of His slave as long as death's gurgling has not begun."

Here gurgling is a figure of speech intended to represent the state of death and its throes by the passing of the soul through the throat. .

It is written in the *Quran*:

- 1) *"But their belief, when they saw Our might, did not profit them"* (40 : 85).
- 2) *"But repentance is not for those who do evil deeds until when one of them is visited by death, he says, 'Indeed, now I repent'"* (4 : 21).

We may safely make deductions from this second verse whereas, in the first verse, the possibility exists that the seeing of "Our Might" refers to one of the signs of the Last Day, such as the sun's rising in the west. Some

commentators have written that the second verse points openly to the fact that at the time of death neither faith nor repentance will be accepted. Then, from these textual evidences, it can be deduced that in the same way that faith will not be accepted at the time of agony, repentance for sins will not be accepted either. This is the opinion of the legalists and most of the theologists from the schools of al *A'shari* and of *Maaturidi*. According to more than just a few scholars, however, agony's repentance is acceptable; though as mentioned above, there is general agreement on its unacceptability.

From this point it logically follows that there should be general agreement on the non-acceptability of *Firaun*'s (Pharaoh's) faith at the time of his drowning; because that time was the time of death's agony and giving up hope of life, and a time of compulsion without will. It is an article of faith with all the scholars of this community that *Firaun* died a disbeliever, in the state of disbelief, because wherever reference is made to him in the *Shariah* it is always by way of censuring his disbelief and tyranny.

The following Quranic verses clearly indicate that he was an unbeliever, and to be counted among the inhabitants of Hell:

"So Allah seized him and made an example of him in the hereafter as in this life" (79 : 25).

"He shall go before his people on the day of Judgement and will lead them down to the Fire"
(11 : 98).

Those familiar with Arabic will understand that the meaning of "*He shall go before his people*" is that *Firaun*, as the leader, will himself enter the Fire, and that his people

will follow after him. A similar construction is used in a tradition concerning *Imra ul Qais*, the leading poet of Pre-Islamic times; "He shall go before the poets in the Fire." In another place the *Quran* says;

"And he waxed proud in the land, he and his hosts, wrongfully, and they thought that they would not have to return to Us" (28 : 49).

This is clearly the delusion of an unbeliever. Accordingly, it is written;

"Therefore We seized him and his host, and cast them into the sea; So behold how was the end of the evil doers. And We appointed them leaders, calling to the Fire, and on the Day of Judgement they shall not be helped; and We pursued them in this world with a curse, and on the Day of Judgement they shall be among the spurned" (28 : 50).

This is *Firaun's* position as presented in the *Quran*. Had he left this world purified by faith, the *Quran* would never have described him in such terms. If someone was to say that the excess, haughtiness, vain-glory and tyranny ascribed to him in the *Quran* refer only to his former, worldly condition, then what answer has he for the following verse?

"On the Day of Judgement they shall be among the spurned" (28 : 50).

No one who has considered the context of this verse could ever allow that its pronouns and figures refer to *Firaun's* army to the exclusion of *Firaun* himself. It is irrational to suppose that Allah accepted him as a devout Muslim and a true believer when He never once praised

him, or intimated that he would come to a good end, or mentioned him as being one of His servants who spent his entire life time caught in the web of sin and disbelief and who, through His mercy and grace, had at last come to belief. Rather the contrary is true; wherever he is mentioned it is with censure and reproach. Nowhere, with the exception of the following verse, is there any mention of his faith or Islam;

When the drowsing overtook him he said,

"I believe that there is no God but He in whom the children of Isra'il believe; I am of the muslims" (10 : 90).

From the context of the verse the careful reader will discern that there is nothing more to the story than that this tyrant spent his entire lifetime in arrogance, extravagance, disbelief and insolence, and that *Musa* and *Haroon*, upon whom be peace, invoked the Divine wrath of Allah against him and his army, and that at the last moment when the tyrant had lost all hope of life and had glimpsed the torment that awaited him, he mouthed the words of belief. But of what benefit was his belief when the reins of choice had been stripped from his hands?

His Lord will have said to him, "*Where is your disbelief and corruption today? We will disgrace you in this world, then We will dredge up your corpse from the ocean's depths and make of it a spectacle so that the entire world may reflect upon the end of those haughty disbelievers who rebel against Us and Our Prophet!*"

"So Allah seized him and made an example of him in the hereafter as in this life."

"Surely in that is a lesson for those who fear" (99 : 25).

Firaun's wife's saying;

"He will be a joy of the eye to me and you; slay him not." (28 : 9).

was no more than conjecture on her part. The Divine wisdom in all of that was to deliver the Prophet *Musa*, upon whom be peace, from the tyrant's hand and to preserve him from falling victim to the execution *Firaun* had commanded for every male child born in Egypt that year. Again, it is possible that this was a strategem she devised in order to save *Musa*, upon whom be peace, from the oppressor as a result of her having glimpsed, either intuitively or by inspiration, into the boy's future.

The apparent meaning of the verse;

"Then the folk of Firaun picked him out of the river. It was intended that Musa should be to them an enemy and a sorrow" (28 : 8).

is that he was to be their true enemy; and no Prophet has ever been the enemy of a Muslim.

Furthermore, *Firaun* has earned the contempt of the Prophet, upon whom be peace, and his entire community, his companions and their followers, and both the earlier and later scholars and Sufis. His disbelief is proverbial. In the *Hadith* about the death of *Abu Jahl*, the accursed, at the battle of Badr, the Prophet, upon whom be peace, says, *"The Firaun of this community has died."*

If *Firaun* left this world purified by the waters of faith, then why would he be accused *Abu Jahl*, no doubt bound for Hell, be compared to him? If someone was to suggest that the similarity lies in the haughtiness and insolence they exhibited in their life times, then we would point out that the *Shariah* has never used someone who repented and then accepted Islam as an example of disobedience and unbelief on the basis of his lifetime prior to Islam; because faith disengages the believer from his past. How many of the nobles of *Qureish* spent their lives in disbelief and enmity towards the Prophet, upon whom be peace, until finally they too accepted Islam? Yet never once are they mentioned in the *Shariah* with anything like censure or reproach.

No one from among the *Shaykhs*, with the exception of *Muhy ud Deen Ibne ul Arabi* in this book *Fusoos ul Hikam*, has ever ascribed faith to *Firaun*. This idea of his is based either on the acceptability of agony's faith, and that, as we have already seen, would be to contradict all of orthodoxy; or on the assumption that *Firaun's* faith was not agony's faith. Yet it is a certainty that the time of being overtaken by drowning is the time of death's setting in and "agony" as we have previously defined it. The beginning stages of drowning are another matter and cannot be said to resemble the conditions that obtain at the time of "overtaking".

When the entire community has agreed upon his lack of faith, then of what avail is it to negate "agony" in order to establish that faith? *Shaykh Muhy ud Deen* in his *Futuhaat Makkiah* has himself dispraised *Firaun* for his unbelief. There he writes that there are different levels and stages in Hell, some more severe than others. One stage, he writes, is for those who rebel against and are insolent to the Lord of Glory in the manner of *Firaun* and others like him. Theirs is the grossest kind of unbelief.

Yet, in his *Fusoos ul Hikam*, he contradicts himself. Some scholars have said that in that book the Shaykh was merely explaining a possible interpretation of the verse,

"when the drowing overtook him he said, 'I believe...' " and that what he wrote in his *Futuhaat Makkiah* represents his personal belief; but Allah knows best.

On the assumption that the *Shaykh* considered *Firaun*'s faith to be acceptable, then who else, in all good conscience, could possibly do so when faced with the fact that the entire community has agreed on its unacceptability? When confronted with such a confused situation, it might be better to connive at what he has written and attempt to reconcile it in any way possible to the consensus of the community.

To choose to believe his opinion, in direct opposition to the consensus of the entire community is unthinkable. Nonetheless, a number of ignorant people in these times have done just that!

In Allah we seek refuge from mental lapses and imbalance!

Finally, none but the Prophet, upon whom be peace, are perfect. If someone makes a mistake in a theological discussion, then his humanity has entitled him to it. The four great *Imams* themselves, followed through the ages by generations of *Muslimeen*, were not by any means infallible and made any number of mistakes in their legal judgements. So if the *Shaykh Muhy ud Deen* made a mistake on this question, it should not be a matter of great surprise. But when someone decides to defy the entire community because of one man's opinion (the *Shaykh*'s

opinion), it is another matter. If he has done so out of the belief that one man from the entire community has been made the sole repository of truth, then what proof has he to support this claim? And if it is no more than that he is a sincere follower of the *Shaykh Muhy ud Deen*, then in matters of theology it is far more prudent to follow the scholars of that particular field from among the *Imams* and the devout forebears.

It might be argued that the *Shaykh Muhy ud Deen* was a great spiritual master, conversant with all manner of hidden truths and subtleties, and that in a question concerning the *Shariah* it would be impossible for him to make a mistake since everything that he wrote in his book came, without alteration, from the Refuge of Prophecy, Muhammad, upon whom be peace.

We would first say that the *Shaykh*'s spiritual position is not to be questioned. His receiving inspiration and occasionally glimpsing into the Unseen have been confirmed, and are accepted by nearly all. However, this is a question of *Shariah* law, and in such questions, there is need of proof in either the form of textual evidence or proper analogy.

It is self evident that men are subject to oversight and error. None, save the Prophet, upon whom be peace, are infallible. The *Shaykh* has written in his *Futuaat Makkiah* that there is not a single verse in the *Quran* confirming eternal torment. The closest thing to it are verses about eternal confinement in the Fire. That is what the *Shaykh* has written. However, the fact is that eternal torment has been mentioned at many places in the *Quran*. For example, in *Sura Maidah* it has been revealed;

"And in torment they shall dwell forever" (5 : 80).

In *Sura al-Furqaan* it is written;

"And he shall forever dwell therein humbled" (25 : 69).

The word ‘therein’ refers to the torment of Hell mentioned in a verse just before this one.

In *Sura Alif Lam Mim Sajdah* it has been revealed;

"Taste the torment of eternity!" (32 : 14).

In *Sura Zukhruf* it has been revealed;

"But the evildoers shall dwell forever in the torment of Hell" (43 : 74)

Then, in spite of the *Shaykh Muhy ud Deen*'s knowledge and other perfections, he is also known to have made mistakes; and Allah knows best.

In summary, it is better where matters of faith and the laws of belief and unbelief are concerned to follow the acknowledged *Imams*. This applies in all cases, and especially so in this case as it is a question that the entire community of Muslims has agreed upon. Yes, in matters pertaining to morals, manners, and good qualities the instruction of *Sufi Shaykhs* is invaluable, and they are to be thought very highly of in this regard. Yet, as a general rule, the words they speak should be taken in the light of what the great *Imams* and scholars have said.

No doubt, every Muslim should exert himself in spiritual disciplines and devotion of one kind or another. Then those who are sincere, properly prepared, and rigorous in their discipline will find their efforts rewarded by having their inner beings revealed to themselves.

However, one should be wary of whom one chooses to follow, and of the various mannerisms and affectations which all too often creep into these affairs when they are not properly conducted. And Allah is the Lord of Success.

The *Shaykh Ibne Hajar* has mentioned in his *Kitab uz Zawwajir* that on the basis of this verse;

"But their belief when they saw Our might did not profit them" (40 :85).

The entire community has agreed upon the unacceptability of *Firaun's* belief. *Ibne Hajar* goes on to say that even if someone were to consider his belief acceptable, still there would be no doubt about the soundness of the community's collective opinion because of the unacceptability of someone's believing in Allah while at the same time denying His Prophets. So then, even if it was conceded that *Firaun's* belief was acceptable, it is clear that he never believed in *Musa*, upon whom be peace. So of what benefit was his belief? If an unbeliever was to cant a thousand times,

"I testify that there is no God but He in whom the Muslims believe."

He would not be considered a believer until he added;

"and that Muhammad is His Prophet."

The objection might rise that *Firaun's* magicians never believed in *Musa*, upon whom be peace, and yet inspite of that their faith was accepted. The answer is to say that the objection is not valid because the magicians said,

"We believe in the Lord of all Being, the Lord of Musa and Haroon" (26 : 48).

Then, in their connecting their belief to *Musa*'s Lord and *Haroon*'s they have also implied their belief in *Musa* and *Haroon*, upon whom be peace. On the other hand, *Firaun* never connected his belief to *Musa*'s Lord, but said instead, "In whom the children of *Isra'il* believe."

Secondly, the magicians came to believe in Allah through miracles performed at the hands of *Musa*, upon whom be peace. Some one's having belief in a Prophet's miracle is no different from his having belief in that Prophet himself. Then the magicians quite clearly believed in *Musa*, upon whom be peace, where *Firaun* did not. *Firaun* never once mentioned his belief in *Musa*, and it is this disregard, coupled with his mentioning the Lord of *Bani Isra'il*, (not of *Musa*) that speaks most eloquently in favour of his unbelief.

I have condensed these last few paragraphs from *Ibne Hajar's Kitab az Zawaajir*. Allah knows best, and He is the Guide to the Secrets that lie within. Peace and Prayers be upon the Master, the Verifier and the Verified, Muhammad, his family, his companions and all those who follow him!

59. Commission of a major sin does not deprive the believer of faith.

والكبيرة لا تخرج العبد المُؤمن من الإيمان

In its most basic form faith is simply the heart's inner belief. Works are not a part of this simple faith but rather, when linked with it, complete it and perfect it. Then faith without works is not complete faith, but incomplete and imperfect faith. If something is incomplete it does not mean that it is no longer that some 'something', but simply an

incomplete version of it. In other words, it is not a complete 'something'. Then the major sin (*Kabirah*), if committed by a believer will reduce his faith to incompleteness, but will not deprive him of it altogether. Thus, sin and disobedience make one a sinner or disobedient, but not a disbeliever.

With this in mind, then, we may observe that there are two kinds of believers: the obedient or complete believer, and the disobedient or incomplete believer. The word 'believers' when used in the *Quran* and *Hadith* refers to both the obedient and the disobedient believers, depending on the context of the verse in which the word occurs. In addition, the commands and prohibitions of the *Shariah* apply equally in both cases. The Prophet's companions, may Allah be pleased with them, used to read their prayers alongside the disobedient; and whenever one from among them died, the companions read funeral prayers for him and buried him in the graveyard of the *Muslimeen*. Then, sinners and disobedient individuals can in no way be thought to be outside the pale of Islam.

Sins can be classified as belonging to one or the other of two basic categories; the major sin (*Kabirah*) and the minor sin (*Saghirahh*). The *Kabirah* is that sin whose commission has been shown by conclusive evidence to be unlawful, or whose perpetrator has been threatened with punishment in the *Shariah*. Examples of the *Kabirah* are as follows:-

- 1) The unlawful shedding of blood.
- 2) Adultery.
- 3) Sodomy.
- 4) Falsely accusing a married woman of fornication.
- 5) Running from battle when faced with an enemy only twice as strong.
- 6) Sorcery.

- 7) Unlawfully spending the wealth of orphans.
- 8) Annoying one's mother or father.
- 9) The commission, within the boundaries of *Makkah*, of acts specifically prohibited from taking place within the Sacred City.
- 10) Usury.
- 11) Thievery.
- 12) The consumption of alcohol and other intoxicants.
- 13) Eating the flesh of swine.
- 14) Giving false witness.
- 15) Withholding evidence without an excuse.
- 16) Eating during the day time without a valid legal excuse in the month of *Ramadan*.
- 17) Neglecting the performance of prayers.
- 18) Making prayer at other than the prescribed times.
- 19) Withholding *Zakat*.
- 20) Taking false oaths.
- 21) The breaking off of all relations with relatives.
- 22) Falsifying weights and giving short measures.
- 23) Unlawfully going to war against (other) Muslims.
- 24) Cursing the Prophets or otherwise speaking disrespectfully about them or their companions.
- 25) Bribery.
- 26) Slanderizing the *Sultan*.
- 27) One's not enjoining good and forbidding wrong despite one's ability to do so.
- 28) Forgetting what one has learnt of the *Quran*.
- 29) Setting fire to a living being.
- 30) A wife's disobedience to her husband.
- 31) A husband's tyranny over his wife.
- 32) A third person's stirring up trouble between a man and his wife.
- 33) Abusing or insulting religious scholars and those who have memorised the *Quran*.
- 34) To despair of Allah's mercy.
- 35) To be unafraid of Allah's punishment. -

Jalal ud Deen Dawwani has narrated these examples on the authority of *ar Rawaani*, one of the companions of the *Imam Shafei*. Other scholars have listed even more examples. However, the general rule to be followed in deciding whether a sin is a *Kabirah* or not is to turn to the sources of the *Shariah*. If, there, a warning is to be found concerning the one who performs such an act, and there is no doubt in the authenticity of the threat,¹ then that sin is a *Kubirah*.

The minor sin or *Saghirah* is that which does not fit the definition of a *Kabirah*. Owing to the difficulty involved in refraining from the *Saghirah*, its commission is not quite as serious a matter as the commission of a *Kabirah*. Furthermore, the *Saghirah* does not detract from a person's devoutness as long as he does not persist in it. As for the one who commits a *Kabirah*, he remains, inspite of the incompleteness of his faith, a Muslim.

The *Kharijiyah* sect considers the one who commits either a *Kabirah* or a *Saghirah* to be an unbeliever. From what we have explained here it should be clear that their claim is an invalid one. The *Mu'tazila* sect claimed that the one who commits a *Kabirah* is neither a believer nor an unbeliever. This particular question was the first in the history of Islam to cause one group to be set at odds with the remaining majority of the *Ummah*. The *Mu'tazila* was the first sect to attempt the breaching of the foundations of the religion by making the teachings of Islam conform to the inconsistencies of their rationalism, and by distorting, in the process, the apparent meaning of Quranic verses and traditional texts out of all proportion;

¹ If the threat is contained in a verse of the Quran, then there can be no doubt of its authenticity; and if it is contained in a Hadith, then the opinions of the traditional scholars must be consulted with regard to its authenticity. (trans.)

"May they be forsaken by Allah!"

Their doctrines were false and their opinions feeble. Indeed, the Almighty has divided His slaves into two groups;

"It is He who created all of you. Among you the unbeliever, and among you the believer" (64 :2).

There is no third group. Actually, these people never knew what it was to have faith in the Prophet, upon whom be peace; I mean the kind of faith that causes all error and disobedience to wither away beneath the shimmering beams of its burning fervor.

In the same way that good works will never benefit the disbeliever, sins will never overcome the true believer. His belief may be incomplete, but as long as he acknowledges the wrong of what he does he will remain a believer. However, if he does not acknowledge the wrong of what he does, by supposing for example his misdeed to be something permissible, or *Haraam* to be *Halaal*, then he is no longer a believer; because that is the essence of disbelief itself. However, when he knows and believes *Haraam* to be *Haraam* and a misdeed to be a misdeed, yet due to his humanity is overcome by desire and commits a sin, then he is not a disbeliever. This is because there is nothing here to contradict the essence of faith or the heart's inner belief. His heart is Muslim and brimming with faith, yet his limbs are unruly and pay no attention to his heart. This is especially true when the heart is stricken with the fear of punishment, or hope of forgiveness, or by pangs of remorse.

Yet, inspite of all this, a believer should not let himself be deceived. Since will mar the purity of the heart and the freshness of faith until finally, as the heart hardens and is increasingly blackened, he comes to within only a step from disbelief. Then the person who makes a habit of committing a certain sin will have a difficult time retaining his faith.

It is recorded in the traditions that when a believer commits a sin, a black spot forms on his heart. Then, if he repents of what he has done, the spot disappears; and if not, then the spot begins to spread until it has enveloped the entire heart. As the darkness grows with the ever-increasing burden of sin and error, the space within the heart which is still capable of listening to and accepting matters of truth and faith begins to diminish. This is the meaning of the words, ‘Seal’ and ‘Rust’ in the following verses of the *Quran*:

- 1) “*Allah has set a seal on their hearts*” (2 : 7).
- 2) “But that they were earning has rusted upon their hearts” (83 : 14).

Then sins, while not exactly causing the loss of faith, are at least to be feared as potentially leading to that.

Salvation lies in taking from the world only what is necessary, and that consists of three things. The first is to eat only as much as will ward off hunger. The second is to wear only as much clothing as is necessary to cover oneself properly. The third is to dwell in a place which affords no more than shelter. To go beyond the bounds of necessity by opening the door to more and more “permitted” things is the same as inviting the dubious and the undesirable until eventually, at the heels of the undesirable (*Makrooh*), the unlawful will enter. At that point you will have reached the

outer fringes of Islam after which nothing remains but the desert of disbelief. May Allah save us from such a fate!

In summary, the way of perfection and salvation can be attained first by having faith, then by performing all the necessary duties and devotions, then by performing those extra devotions that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, used to perform more or less regularly, then by performing those extra devotions that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, used to perform more or less regularly, then by performing those that he, upon whom be peace, performed occasionally for the sole purpose of acquiring extra merit, and lastly by continuing to live in this way until the time of death. The way of digression and imperfection is the way of doubtful and *Haraam* actions leading finally to disbelief. The essence of all works and of one's security in all situations lies in one's remaining in a state of both hope and fear. Indeed, Allah guides whom He wills.

60. The believers who have committed major sins will not be confined eternally to the Fire, even if they die without making repentance

وأهل الكبار من المؤمنين لا يخلدون في النار، وإن ماتوا من غير توبة

A believer's committing a *Kabirah* does not make him an unbeliever. Secondly, it is clear from the evidence of the *Quran* and *Hadith* that the eternal confinement in the Fire is a punishment reserved especially for the unbelievers. The logical conclusion of these two premises is that the believer who has committed a *Kabirah* will not be consigned eternally to the Fire; and that this will hold true even if he dies without having made repentance for his *Kabirah*. The All-Powerful, The All-Knowing, Exalted be His Glory, in His wisdom will confine the sinner in the Fire for as long as He wills and then, when the sinner has become purified, the

Almighty will deliver him over to Paradise to live therein forever and ever.

Hakim Tirmizi, in his *Nawaadir ul Usul*, has narrated a tradition on the authority of Abu Hurairah, May Allah be pleased with him, in which it is stated that some of the sinning believers will abide in the Fire for no more than an hour, some for a day, some a month, and some a year. The longest period that any sinning believer will have to spend in the Fire will be the equivalent to the number of years in his life time. It is said that the oldest man ever to live died at the age of seven thousand years. May Allah preserve us from such a fate! The tradition has also been related by Ibne Hatim and Ibne Shaheen on the authority of the Commander of the Faithful, the Khalifah Ali, May Allah be pleased with him.

"Allah forgives not that aught should be with him associated; less than that he forgives to whomsoever he will" (4 : 48).

The Almighty has revealed to us in this verse that he will never reward an idolater or an unbeliever. All others are subject to His will. Whether they have committed major or minor sins, and whether or not they have repented, He will punish those he wills to punish and reward those He wills to reward.

- 1) *"Allah does what he wills"* (14 : 27).
- 2) *"Allah decrees whatsoever He wills"* (5 : 1).

Briefly, there are two kinds of men; believers and unbelievers. Then there are two kinds of believers; obedient believers and sinning believers. Then again there are two kinds of sinning believers; the repentant and non-repentant.

There is universal agreement on the unbeliever's eternal consignment to the Fire. There is agreement, likewise, that the obedient and repentant believers will dwell in Paradise forever. Only Allah knows how He will choose to deal with the non-repentant believers. If He should so will they will be given a measure of punishment equal to their sins before being taken from the Fire and transported to Paradise. Or He might forgive them, of His own will or owing to someone's intercession, and send them straight to Paradise.

"He chastises whom He wills, and forgives whom He wills" (5 : 44).

There are a considerable number of *Hadith* touching on the subject of pardon and forgiveness. We have mentioned one such *Hadith* in the chapter entitled "The questioning is truth." A similar *Hadith* has it that Allah Most High will have his slave brought before Him for Judgement. When he is presented his book of deeds he will find his evil deeds written inside of it and his good deeds written on the outside covers for all to see. Then Allah will say, "O My slave! Prior to this I have veiled all your sins. Today I forgive you of them all. Go to Paradise and live therein forever!"

These are matters which pertain exclusively to the will of Allah. There can be no rational inquiries into the why and wherefore of, for example, an unbeliever's receiving forgiveness; or one's receiving forgiveness and another's receiving punishment.

"Allah does what He wills" (14 : 27).

"Allah decrees whatsoever He wills" (5 : 1).

It should be evident that Allah's decisions in these matters are such that he will never fail to fulfil a promise. Yet, with regard to threats, He will sometimes carry them out and sometimes not. This is His generosity. In general, those known for their generosity will always make good their promises of rewards or presents. The Arabian proverb goes:

"The generous, when they promise, fulfil."

Yet when, in anger, the generous make a threat, most often they will forgive later on.

Some say that the Almighty never contradicts either His promises or His threats. They reason that, if He did, it would necessitate the falsehood of much of what He has revealed; and that is clearly unthinkable as he is far above such things. The answer to what they have said is that it is possible that, in accordance with the requirements of His generosity, whenever He makes a threat, "If I should so will" is an unspoken but nonetheless understood condition of that threat's being carried out. On the other hand, His promises are made without this condition. Those verses in the *Quran*, and those *Hadith* in which His will is openly made a condition in such matters give ample indication of its being "understood" in other places.

Another possible answer is that the meaning behind His threat is merely that someone deserves a particular punishment; not that he will actually receive it. A third possibility is that His threats are exclamations and not declarations. Then, in the light of these answers, the questions of contradiction and falsehood need not arise. Allah is the master of Success, and it is He who knows best!

61. Punishment is warrantable for minor sins

ويجوز العقاب على الصغيرة

Short of unbelief, whether a sin is punishable or not depends entirely on the will of Allah. Then punishment with regard to minor sins is a matter for the Almighty to decide.

62. The Almighty appointed from mankind Prophets and sent them to give mankind good tidings and admonition, and to explain to them what they require in terms of both worldly and spiritual matters.

**وأَنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى أَرْسَلَ رَسُولًا مِّنَ الْبَشَرِ مُبَشِّرًا وَمُنذِرًا وَمُبَيِّنًا لِلنَّاسِ
مَا يَحْتَاجُونَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ أَمْرٍ الدِّينِ وَالدِّينِ**

Nothing is incumbent upon the Lord, may He be exalted. He is under no obligation or compulsion in any of the things He does; whatever He does is of His own volition and will. He is not subject to the dictates of reason in what it might suppose to be His duties or obligations; on the contrary, reason itself is no more than one of His subjects.

Allah, in His Grace, His Mercy, His Generosity and His Compassion, has taken on Himself the administration of a number of things necessary to the perpetuation of the world, and the perfection of mankind as individuals, or in other words, the social and spiritual welfare of mankind. On the one hand He provides them means of livelihood and, on the other, He provides the means of guidance and success. This is where the Prophets, upon whom be peace, fit in. None of this is obligatory upon Him but rather, owing to His grace, is a carrying out of His will. Since the great majority of mankind are neither prepared nor able to receive direct communications from Allah, He has selected

certain men to receive knowledge of His person, His attributes, and His ways; and he has taught them the way to man's success in this world and the next. These are the Prophets, sent by the Almighty to all mankind to call to the truth. They are the messengers of Divine Guidance teaching mankind what it needs to know in this world and the next of matters of faith and practice.

Allah has created Paradise and He has created Hell. He has made Paradise a dwelling for the devout and Hell a dwelling for the evildoers. Reason alone is not sufficient to ascertain those works which will lead to Paradise or prevent one from being cast into Hell. Therefore, Allah sent the Prophets, upon whom be peace, to instruct His creation in the ways leading to their salvation. Then, when they go before Him for judgement, ignorance will be no excuse.

- 1) "*Messengers bearing good tidings, and warning, so that mankind might have no argument against Allah after the messengers*" (4 : 164).
- 2) "*We have not sent you save as a mercy unto all beings*" (21 : 107).

The essentials of every field of knowledge known to man, whether having to do with the heavens or the earth, have come to us through the offices of Allah's Prophets, upon whom be peace. This is because all knowledge springs from the fountainhead of Divine Revelation. The scholars and thinkers of this world have all drunk from this fountain for their knowledge; and though they might increase it through analogy, the exercise of judgement, and experimentation, they do no more than to elucidate and interpret what the Prophets taught. The reason that some branches of knowledge seem not to be in accordance with the Divine Law (*Shariah*), in spite of their being based on Divine Revelation, is that it is Allah's way to alter the

outward form of the religion and abrogate its legislation in favour of something more suitable to conditions that may later obtain. Other factors are that some people refuse to accept the changes brought about by a new Prophet and continue to practice in the light of the old laws, while others actively falsify the legal texts or make unlawful additions. Still others give rein to their imaginations and draw invalid and often incredible analogies from revealed texts and thus throw open the doors to argument and dispute.

The belief that those scholars and thinkers never relied on teachers for their knowledge, or on any other medium, but that they depended entirely on their intellects is extremely far-fetched, the way to the attainment of knowledge is education, after that the intellect may make its own deductions. It is related in the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad, upon whom be peace;

"Knowledge comes about through education, and clemency through forebearance."

63. The Almighty substantiated the claims of His Prophets with manifest miracles and clear signs, each in itself a call to faith

وأيدهم الله بالمعجزات الباهرة والآيات الساطعة المفيدة للبيقين

A claim, in order to be accepted, must be supported by proof. Likewise, a claimant must be able to present convincing evidence. The evidence used by the Prophets of Allah, upon whom be peace, in establishing the truth of their claims to be Prophets and the ambassadors of Allah to His creation was their performance of miracles (*M'ujizah*).

A *M'ujizah* is anything that does not allow duplication by others and occurs contrary to the ordinary course of

affairs at the hands of one who claims to be a Prophet in apparent support of his claim.

The meaning of contrary to the ordinary course of affairs is that the All-Wise has assigned a cause for every action that takes place in this world. It is not the way of Allah to create an action without assigning to it some sort of apparent cause. This is what is meant by the ordinary course of affairs. Sometimes, however, through the exercise of His power, the Almighty "breaks through" the ordinary course of affairs by bringing about at the hands of His Prophets, upon whom be peace, actions and events that have no tangible causes, as evidence of their Prophethood.

Miracles are the doing of Allah, not of His Prophets.¹ This is because it is impossible for any man to cause anything to go contrary to the normal laws of nature appointed for it by Allah. Then the miracle is an indisputable proof of a Prophet's truthfulness.

As soon as a miracle is witnessed, one's heart accepts the truth of the Prophet's claim, and one's inner being is forced to acknowledge its truth. Thus, there can remain no possibility of denial.

When the claim is great, its proof must be equally as great. A miracle is a sign of the power and glory of Allah, and in front of its onslaught nothing can hold its ground.

On the other hand, the logical proof is nothing more than a few knots in a thread of reasoning. To defeat an opponent, or at least silence him, with such equipment is extremely difficult; with the result that an argument might

¹ "It was not for any messenger to bring a sign save by Allah's leave." (40 : 78) trans.

go on forever. Philosophy and scholastic theology are based on this kind of proof. Finally, whoever witnessed a miracle and afterwards remained an unbeliever, did so out of obstinacy and for no other reason.

64. The first of the Prophets was Adam, upon whom be peace, and the Last of the Prophets was Muhammad, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him

وأول الأنبياء آدم عليه السلام وأخرهم محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم

"Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but the Messenger of Allah, and the Last of the Prophets" (33 : 40).

The mission of Muhammad, upon whom be peace, was to perfect religion and refine the noble qualities that lay dormant within mankind. When his mission had been accomplished, and both religion and manners had been perfected, there remained no further need for any other Prophets. The Prophet's successors (*Khulafa*) and the scholars (*Ulama*) of Islam in their capacity as both the supporters and defenders of the faith will suffice to protect and promote the religion of Islam for all time.

65. It is more appropriate to refrain from specifying their numbers

والأنجليز أن لا يعن عددهم

The number one hundred and twenty four thousand has been mentioned in some traditions. However, it has been revealed in the *Quran* that:

"We sent Prophets before you, of some we have related to you, and some we have not related" (40 : 78).

It is possible that the traditions record a number mentioned by the Prophet, upon whom be peace, after the revelation of this verse, but we cannot be sure. Prudence lies in our regarding their actual numbers a matter of obscurity known only to Allah; and of course Allah knows best.

Dhul Qarnain: Concerning the Prophethood of *Dhul Qarnain* there are a number of different opinions. According to some, he was a Prophet, though most are of the opinion that he was a just, Muslim king. The latter is the sounder of the two opinions, and it is recorded that this was the opinion of the *Khalifah Ali*, may Allah be pleased with him. Still another opinion is that *Dhul Qarnain* was an angel; but that is very unlikely.

There is also a difference of opinion concerning his name. The most famous of those opinions is that his name was *Iskendar*. *Abdullah*, *Mirzaban*, *Mirzabi*, *Hormus*, and other names have also been recorded. This is *Iskendar Ibne Failaqus ar-Rumi* (Alexander, the son of Phillip the Macedonian), the same one who met with *Khidr*, upon whom be peace, and unsuccessfully tried to find the fountain of youth. *Iskender* the Greek, the friend of Aristotle was another person. It is said that he was a descendant of *Younaan Ibne Yaafith Ibne Nuh*; and Allah knows best.

Dhul Qarnain was a contemporary of the Prophet Ibrahim, upon whom be peace, according to most, though some claim that he lived sometime after the Prophet Musa, upon whom be peace. The *Shaykh of Hadith*, *Ibne Abdul Barr* was of the opinion that he lived after the Prophet Jesus, upon whom be peace.

It is said that in history only four people have been kings of all the earth. Two of them were Muslims, *Suleiman*, upon whom be peace, and *Dhul Qarnain*; and two of them were unbelievers, *Nimrod* and Nebuchadnezzar. In the last days, the fifth king to rule the earth from East to West will be the *Imam Mahdi*, upon whom be peace.

There are a number of opinions concerning how Iskendar came to be called *Dhul Qarnain* (the two horned one). According to *Wahab Ibne Munabbih*, he received the name because he was the king of the two horns of the earth. By the two horns of the earth he meant either the East and the West, or Rome and Persia, or perhaps Asia and Persia. According to *Hasan Basri*, he had two long locks of hair and for that reason was called *Dhul Qarnain*. According to some he actually had two horns, like the horns of a cow, on his head. Another opinion is that he rules as king for two centuries (*Qarnain* in Arabic also means two centuries). In a tradition going back to the *Khalifah Ali*, may Allah be pleased with him, it is related that he was called *Dhul Qarnain* because he received wounds on either side of his head while fighting in *Jihad*.

Ibne Kawah, one of the companions of the *Khalifah Ali*, may Allah be pleased with him, was asked or not *Dhul Qarnain* was a Prophet.

"No" he replied, "He was a pious man who died from a wound he received on the right side of his head while fighting in the path of Allah. Then Allah brought him back to life. He continued to fight until he died of a wound on the left side his head. Again Allah brought him back to life. From that day onward they called him *Dhul Qarnain*."

Some say that he had a dream in which he saw himself transported to the sun where he conquered its two faces. Then, when he related the dream to his people, they began calling him *Dhul Qarnain*; and Allah knows best.

Lugman: Concerning the identity of *Lugman* there is also many number of different opinions. It is said, for example, that he was the son of *Ayyub's* (Job's) daughter. According to another tradition, he was the son of *Ayyub's* aunt. Some say that he was a Prophet, while others maintain the truth is that he was a wise man and a *Wali* (saint). According to some, he was servant and student to over a thousand Prophets. It is related on the authority of *Ibne Abbas*, may Allah be pleased with him, that *Lugman* was a Prophet, and not a king, but an Ethiopian slave and shepherd who was chosen by Allah to receive wisdom, understanding and Prophethood.

Khidr: Concerning *Khidr* the most authentic explanation is that he is an ancient Prophet who is hidden from the eyes of men and who will live until the Day of Judgement because of his having drunk from the fountain of youth. Some claim that he was a *Wali* and no more. The opinion of those who say he was an angel is very weak. The entire community of scholars is agreed that he is living and will die only when the *Quran* is no longer remembered, (just before the Last Day).

Ibne Hajar, in his commentary on the collection of traditions known as *Sahih ul Bukari*, has written that the truth of the matter is that he is a Prophet. The great traditional scholar, *Muhammad Ibne Abdur Rahman as-Sakhawi* has expressed the same opinion.

Al Qastelaani, in his commentary on *Sahih ul Bukari*, mentions that Khidr's (or Khadir's) name in *Bullian Ibne*

Malikan. Some say that he was the son of *Firaun*; but that is extremely far-fetched. Still others say that he is the son of Malik and the brother of the Prophet Ilyas, upon whom be peace; while others would have it that he is the son of Adam, upon whom be peace; but Allah knows best.

To sum up, nearly the entire community of scholars is of the opinion that he is living. However, a number of traditionists (*Muhadditheen*), among them *Imam Bukhari*, *Ibne ul Mubarak*, *al Harbi* and *Ibne Jawzi*, do deny that he still lives. The proof adduced in support of their denial is a tradition in which the Prophet, upon whom be peace, while on his death bed, is reported to have said that in the future nothing on the face of the earth will live for more than a hundred years. The meaning of this, however, is open to any number of interpretations.

In addition, *Khidr*'s meeting with saints, and they with him, is well known. *Khidr* also met with the Prophet, upon whom be peace; and when he, upon whom be peace, died, *Khidr* sent his consolations to the *Sahaabahh*.

The Prophet's saying;
"If *Khidr* was alive, he would visit me."

occurred before their meeting. In fact, the two met quite often, and *Khidr* himself is said to be in the habit of relating traditions of the Prophet, upon whom be peace. A number of Sufis have listened to him recite those traditions.

Maryam, *Asiyah* (*Firaun*'s wife), *Sarah*, *Hajarah*, *Hawa* (*Adam*'s wife, *Eve*) and *Musa*'s mother *Yujoland* were not Prophets. Prophethood is an office granted exclusively to men.

"We have not sent forth any before you, but men We revealed to" (16 : 43).

In spite of revelation's having been mentioned with regard to these women in the *Quran*, they cannot be considered Prophets. The reason for this is that revelation (*Wahy*) can also be interpreted to mean inspiration or disclosure, as in the following Quranic verse.

"And your Lord revealed unto the bees" (16 : 68).

66. They were, all of them, Allah's messengers, truthful, free of sin, and not one of them was ever removed from office.

وَكُلُّهُمْ كَانُوا مُبْلِغِينَ عَنِ اللَّهِ صَادِقِينَ مَعْصُومُونَ غَيْرُ مَعْزُولِينَ

Whatever the Prophets, upon whom be peace, said is truth. The information they brought came from Allah, and likewise whatever they ordered and whatever they prohibited. They were free of sin. Once they established, through miracles or otherwise, the truth of their claims to Prophethood, there could be no doubt that what they said was entrusted to them by the Almighty in the form of a message.

"It is only for the Prophet to deliver the message"
(6 : 102).

If a Prophet was to speak an untruth, the wisdom in sending him would have been for naught; and if he committed a sin, people would have found him repulsive. Finally the result would have been that his teaching and advice to them was wasted. The Prophets were free, in every way, of untruth and major sins, they could commit them neither purposely nor heedlessly. Similarly, they were never guilty of committing a minor sin purposely. According to some, the commission of major sins by

mistake, and minor sins purposely, is also possible with regard to the Prophets. However, they except those sins which are considered repugnant or indicative of vileness on the part of the one who commits them, like the theft of a morsel or of tampering with scales.

The entire community of *Sunni* Muslims is agreed that they are free of both major and minor sins, intentionally committed or inadvertently. This is more in keeping with the importance and eminence of their position; may Allah grant them eternal peace. All of this has been narrated in the *Qasida Amalia* on the authority of a number of Medinan traditionists and jurists.

Furthermore, it is not possible for the Prophets to commit sins due to negligence or forgetfulness in anything having to do with Prophethood or in their delivering *Shariah* legislation. With the exception of these few things, they might out of negligence or forgetfulness, commit sins in anything else that they do. Some of the mistakes attributed to the Prophets, upon whom be peace, are authentic and some are not. Regarding the authentic ones, one should not base his belief on the obvious, but should seek rather explanations in the appropriate books.

The Prophets, upon whom be peace, were never dismissed from their office. The position of Prophethood bestowed upon them through the generosity and kindness of the Almighty is not something to be retracted. In fact, they retain their Prophethood even after death. Rather, the Prophets, upon whom be peace, do not die but remain living. Death in their cases occurs for an instant, and afterwards their souls are returned to their bodies and the life they possessed in this world returns to them. This life of theirs is more complete than the life which returns to the martyrs, as their's is only a spiritual life. Furthermore, the

abrogation of a *Shariah* is not the same as the dismissal of the Prophet who brought it.

The *Wali*, on the other hand, as long as he remains in this world can never be sure that he will not lose his position, or that his ending will not be a bad one. However, if he dies with faith, for example in his sleep, then he has ended as a believer and a *Wali*.

Concerning the visiting of graves, the legalists have written that with the exception of the graves of the Prophets, no grave is to be visited unless it be for the purpose of contemplating death and reflecting on the transitory nature of life, or for seeking blessings or forgiveness for a departed one. For these reasons only the Prophet, upon whom be peace, according to authentic traditions, visited the cemetery at *Madihah* called *Baqi ul Gharqad*.¹

67. The most excellent of all the Prophets was Muhammad, the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him and his family

وأفضل الأنبياء محمد صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم

His Prophethood is attested to by manifest miracles and clear signs that have come to us through the narrations² of so many people that both their numbers and their trustworthiness exclude doubt of their truth. Every Prophet performed miracles of two kinds, yet the Prophet Muhammad, upon whom be peace, performed miracles of every kind; and he performed a great many of them. From

¹ The following discussion of graveyard etiquette has been omitted by the translator as unnecessary and potentially confusing.

² This type of narration is called *Tawaatur*, and the tradition related in such a manner is called “*al-Hadith al-Mutawaatir*” Of all traditions the *Mutawaatir* is the most authentic.

here it is believed that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, was active in the heavens and earth and in the dominions of the visible and the invisible.

Whatever perfections were to be found in the persons of the Prophets that went before him, upon whom be peace, came together as a whole in the person of the Prophet Muhammad, the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.

Persian Verse

"Whatever good qualities they possess as a group, you, on your own, possess."

In the traditions it is recorded that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said;

"I am the chief of Adam's children, and that is no boast."

In another tradition he is authentically reported to have said;

"Adam and all those after him are (united in following me) beneath my banner."

Second to him, upon whom be peace, in excellence is the Prophet *Ibrahim*, upon whom be peace. Next come *Musa*, Jesus and then *Nuh*, upon all of whom be peace. These five are called the *Ulul Azm* (those endued with resolution) as they, owing to their patience and striving in the way of truth, are superior to the other Prophets.

The greatest of Muhammad's miracles is the *Quran Majid*, one of Allah's attributes (speech) and His, be He Exalted, Glorified Eternal Word. The Prophet's other

miracles, inspite of their having occurred centuries ago, are for us as if we have witnessed them with our own eyes because word of them has reached us through *Mutawaatir* traditions.

One of the greatest proofs of the Prophet's and the *Quran's* truthfulness is to be found in the Quranic challenge to the most determined of all adversaries of Islam, the *Qureish*; known for their eloquence and command of Arabic.

"And if you are in doubt concerning that We have sent down on Our servant, then produce even one chapter to equal it" (2 : 23).

The claim of *Qureish* to be the most eloquent tribe in all Arabia was universally recognised. For this reason the *Quran* was revealed in the very words and letters they claimed to have mastered. Herein lies the secret to the Prophet's miracle of the *Quran*. In fact, most of the miracles performed by Allah's Prophets have occurred in areas judged to be the exclusive domain, and indeed the source of pride, of a certain people at a certain time; as in the case of magic at the time of *Musa*, and medicine at the time of Jesus. These people were experts in uncovering the faults of others in their particular fields, and establishing their (the others) weaknesses, and pointing out the places where they had contradicted themselves. In the times of the Prophet, upon whom be peace, the domain of the Arabs was eloquence. Yet, inspite of the *Quran's* having been revealed in the same letters and words that they themselves took pride in being able to mould into the most lucid and eloquent language, they were unable to produce a single verse to equal it. This is what is known as the '*Ijaz* (inimitability) of the *Quran*.

It is related that when the first verses of the Quran were revealed, the Last of Allah's Prophets, upon whom be peace, had it written and suspended from the temple door at the *Ka'bah* in the fashion of poets and orators of the time. Indeed it was an Arabian institution in those times that the most esteemed and praiseworthy pieces be hung on the *Ka'bah* door for all to see and admire. Everyone who saw the Divine word on the door of the *Ka'bah* was astonished at the force of its composition and style. That it was not the doing of any mortal man was evident. Finally they were forced to admit that it was in fact beyond all human capability to produce such a statement.

Two or three centuries after its revelation, a group from the sect known as the *Mu'tazilah* claimed that they could produce speech similar to the *Quran*. But the manifest power of the Almighty frustrated them in their designs and put a seal on their lips so that they were unable to produce even a verse to compare with the *Quran*.

If we wanted, we could say that our purposes could also be served by imagining for a moment that their claims were legitimate, and then pointing to the fact that inspite of their supposed ability to duplicate such speech, and their extreme avidity in taking up such a challenge, they were thwarted in the attempt. This might also be termed *I'jaz*.

However, the *Mutazilah* were irresponsible in their claims and spoke on the basis of nothing more than their own limited faculties of reason. What proof did they have of their ability to produce speech comparable to the *Quran*? The truth is that besides Allah, no one has the power to equal even a single verse of the *Quran*; otherwise by now the enemies of religion would surely have managed to produce some kind of approximation. The *Quran* speaks out clearly on the subject:

Say: "If men and Jinn bound together to produce the like of this Quran, they would never produce its like, not though they backed one another" (17 : 88).

When one considers the devout conduct, pleasing character, and laudable habits of the Prophet Muhammad, upon whom be peace, he can only be convinced that from head to toe the Prophet himself was an inimitable sign (*I'jaz*).

Persian Couplets:

Every glimpse of your loveliness is another delicacy.
Every note of your perfection is another harmony.
The wonder of your beauty is in no need of the
vocable.
Every blink of your eye is another miracle.

68. He was sent to all creation

وهو مبعوث الى كافة الخلق اجمعين

The Prophet Muhammad, upon whom be peace and blessings of Allah, was sent to men and *Jinn* alike, and for this reason he is called "The Prophet of the Two Weighty Ones." The *Jinns* visiting the Prophet, upon whom be peace, their faith in him, their listening to the *Quran*, and the Prophet's visits to them for the purposes of preaching Islam are all mentioned in the *Holy Quran*.

Most scholars are of the opinion that Muhammad, upon whom be peace, was the only Prophet to be sent to men and *Jinn* alike. However, *Shaykh Jalal ud Deen Sayuti* has written that without doubt the *Jinn* have been legally competent, from a *Shariah* point of view, in the times of former Prophets as well; and one is not legally competent

unless he personally hears a Prophet, or receives word of him and his *Shariah* by means of some reliable and truthful transmitter. Furthermore, the scholars are agreed that a *Jinn* has never been sent as a Prophet to his own kind. In the *Holy Quran* it is recorded that the *Jinn* said:

"Our people, we have heard a Book that was sent down after Musa, confirming what was before it, guiding to the truth and to a straight path" (46 : 30).

It is evident from this verse that the *Jinn* believed in *Musa*, upon whom be peace, and accepted the guidance of his *Shariah*. Then the distinction of *Muhammad*, upon whom be peace, with regard to the *Jinn* is that no other Prophet was able to address them directly in the way that he did in his teachings. Before *Muhammad*, upon whom be peace, the *Jinn* would listen to the scriptures and thereby learn the *Shariah* so that they could practice religion. Here ends what was said by *Imam Sayuti*.

Some scholars have expressed the opinion that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, was sent to the angels as well, but their opinion is an irregular one. According to the most learned scholars, he, upon whom be peace, was sent to all parts of the world and all types of existences; from solids to plants to animals. This is borne out by the fact that he was the object of the greetings (*Salaam*) of boulders, the prostrations of trees, and the testimony (*Shahaadah*) of animals. Men and *Jinn* are created with wills of their own, and for this reason are faced with the choice between believing and not believing; while, for the rest of creation, there is nothing but faith and obedience, as in the case of the angels. This universality of Prophethood is alluded to in the following verse of the *Quran*:

"We have not sent you, save as a mercy unto all beings" (21 : 107).

69. His waking ascent to the heavens in his person, and then to wherever the will of Allah took him is truth

ومراجعته في اليقظة بشخصه إلى السماء ثم إلى ماشاء الله تعالى حق

The test of faith lies in one's attesting to the truth of the Prophet's upon whom be peace, *Mi'raj* (ascent), to his waking ascent in his person, in a very short span of time, to the heavens and the throne of Allah, and on beyond eternity, with all the attendant details and particulars as they have been recorded in the traditions.

True faith lies in accepting this event in its entirety – without pausing to question – in order that neither vacillation nor anxiety should have a chance to interfere with one's beliefs. It is another matter entirely for those adepts who have attained a spiritual position that enables them, through the grace of Allah, to perceive the reality of the state of ascent. That is something reserved for the special servants of Allah from among those of his devotees that have discarded the cloak of human frailties.

Can thoughts of hesitation exist where there is true love and surrender, or perfect faith? For those who truly believe it is sufficient only to hear; and belief follows. *Abu Bakr*, may Allah be pleased with him, received his epithet, *Siddiq*, or Faithful Witness of the Truth, the day he attested to the truth of the Prophet's *Mi'raj* without the least hesitation; while a good many Muslims had such doubts that a number of them apostated. Similarly, *Abu Bakr*, may Allah be pleased with him, when he first accepted Islam did so without asking for any proofs or miracles. At that time the light of the Prophet's miracles and signs had already

begun to shine, yet *Abu Bakr* asked for nothing. Rather, he accepted Islam without a second thought.

8 When the Prophet, upon whom be peace, returned from his *Mi'raj* he was asked by his companions about how the Lord had appeared to him. Some of them he, upon whom be peace, answered openly and others he answered in parables; each according to his ability and understanding. From here it should be apparent that not everyone is capable of being addressed in terms that lay bare the secrets of higher, spiritual truth. In any case, the speech was one; even if there was a difference in the choice of words and presentation.

The truth of the matter is that he, upon whom be peace, saw the Lord with his own two eyes. This is the opinion recorded by all of his companions, may Allah be pleased with them. His seeing the Lord with the heart's eye was a normal occurrence with him. Then if he, upon whom be peace, saw the Lord in his heart's eye on the night of the *Mi'raj*, there would be no meaning to the special privileges afforded him by the Lord for that event. Some have pointed to the difference between seeing with the heart and knowing with it; but Allah knows best.

70. His community is the best of all religious communities

وامنه خير الامم

The *Ummah* (religious community) of Muhammad, upon whom be peace, is the best of all religious communities. This is the logical consequence of his, upon whom be peace, being the best of all the Prophets. In the *Quran* it has been revealed that:

"You are the best Ummah ever brought forth to men"
(3 : 110).

The traditions record that the age of this *Ummah* in comparison with those that have gone by is as the time from *Asr* (midafternoon) to *Maghreb* (sunset) in relation to the remainder of the day. However, inspite of its relatively short duration, it will receive a much greater reward. In another tradition, the Prophet of Allah, upon whom be peace, explained to his companions that the likeness of his *Ummah* in relation to the Christians and the Jews would become apparent to them through the story of an employer who hired three men. The first was to work for him from dawn to noon and receive a wage of one *Dirham*. The second was to work for him from noon to mid afternoon and receive a wage of one *Dirham*. The third's wage was set at two Dirhams for working from midafternoon to sundown. When the time came for payment, the first two men received a *dirham* each and the third received his two *Dirhams*. When the first two saw the difference in their wages they became angry and began arguing with their employer. They had worked longer, they complained, and received less while the other worked less and received more. The employer told them that he had only given them the wages he had fixed for them.

"The rest," he said, "has to do with my generosity, and I will spend it where I will."

The first worker in the story represented the Jews, the second worker the Christians, and the third the people of this *Ummah*.

While this is the last *Ummah* in time, it is the first in reward. Indeed, innumerable traditions have come to us about the virtues of the *Ummah* of Muhammad, upon

whom be peace. Without a doubt, the wonderful and strange thing the knowledge, the acquirements and spiritual accomplishments exhibited by the members of this *Ummah* have never been equaled by the members of any other *Ummah*.

71. His Shariah is the most perfect of all revealed legal systems, and Islam is the religion that abrogates all others.

وشرعه أكمل الشرائع ودينه ناسخ الأديان

Since Muhammad, upon whom be peace, was the 'Seal' and the Last of the Prophets, then without doubt the possibility that there should appear after him any new *Shariah* or religion is absolutely nil. No additions can be expected as nothing remains to be completed. The Prophet of Allah, upon whom be peace, said, "I was sent to perfect the most laudable of character qualities."

The *Shariah* of *Musa*, upon whom be peace, was characterised by its strict and even vengeful aspects. For example, the way to repentance was suicide, a great number of our *Halal* foods were for them *Haram*, they were forbidden from sharing in the spoils of war, and they were subject to almost immediate Divine punishment when they erred. *Musa*, upon whom be peace, himself commanded a great deal of fearful reverence. His fury and his severity in dealing with the enemies of religion was such that not even his co-religionists dared to look him in the eye.

The Prophet Jesus, upon whom be peace, was the picture of love and kindness. His *Shariah* was so characterised by leniency and grace that it contained no legislation concerning the prosecution of battles or

punishments, rather it prohibited outright the making of war.

"But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil: but who shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also, and if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also, and whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. (Mathew 5:29-30)

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The *Shaykh* has made use here of a theory popular among the classical commentators on the *Quran*. While the *Shariah* of Islam is, no doubt, the golden mean; that does not necessitate either the severity attributed to the *Shariah* of *Musa* or the leniency attributed to the *Shariah* of Jesus. If the *Shaykh* had looked into Mathew himself, he would have noticed, only a few lines above the place that he quoted from, the following verses:

"29: and if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee for it is profitable for thee one of thy members should perish and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. 30: and If thy right hand should offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell." Mathew 5:29-30. This is the *Shariah* of Jesus according to Mathew.

The text contains two commands, ‘*pluck it out*’ ‘*cut it off*.’ The general rule is that a command signifies obligation. However, each of the commands is followed by the words “*it is profitable for thee*,” and not ‘*it is obligatory upon thee*.’ Then, at the very least, this legislation points out the recommended course of action in such a situation, if not the obligatory rulings. Then, if the gospel is correct in relating these words, we can see that the *Shariah* of Jesus, upon

whom be peace, had its share of severity as well. The incredible thing is that Christians have the audacity to condemn both the practice and the principles behind Islamic law, when the “Christian ethics” they supposedly base their culture on include such concepts as are mentioned in this verse of the Gospel according to Mathew.

Our Prophet, Muhammad, upon whom be peace, was the picture of every perfection, combining severity and gentleness in equal proportions. At the same time that he, upon whom be peace, possessed the strength, steadfastness, justice, and severity of *Musa*, upon whom be peace, he also possessed the tenderness, grace and compassion of Jesus, upon whom be peace. The Prophet, upon whom be peace, used to say,

“I am a great one for laughing; for battling too.”

The following Quranic verse gives witness to the balance and moderation of the *Shariah* of Islam;

“Making lawful for them the good things and making unlawful for them the corrupt things” (7 : 155).

Clearly the *Shariah* of Islam can best be understood only after a close and penetrating look into the customs and virtues of the Prophet of Islam, Muhammad Ibne Abdullah, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him!

72. His companions were the best people of the Ummah

وأصحابه خيار الأمة

The companions of the Prophet, may Allah be pleased with every one of them, were greater and were more excellent than those who followed them from the rest of the Ummah because they were chosen by Allah for the honour

of accompanying, helping, and defending His Prophet, upon whom be peace. They were the ones who support the pillars of this religion and unfurled the banner of this Ummah's greatness. It has been revealed concerning them in the Quran;

"and well were they entitled to it and worthy of it, and Allah has knowledge of everything" (48 : 26).

There is such a large body of traditions in praise of the companions that even a brief look at them is enough to convince one of their excellence, and the greatness of their reward in the next world. In one such tradition the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "If one of you contributed as much gold as the mountain of Uhud in the way of Allah, it would not amount to as much as an ounce the *Sahaabah* spent in His way."

Another *Hadith* in the same meaning tells us that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "The best of my people (*Ummah*) are my generation, then their immediate followers, then their immediate followers." The evidence in support of their excellence is overwhelming. What better proof could there be than that they were privileged to look directly on the Prophet, upon whom be peace, and associate with him, and hear the *Quran* and matters concerning the *Shariah* from his lips. The Prophet informed them at first hand of Allah's commandments and prohibitions, and addressed them directly in all matters of importance. Furthermore, the companions spent freely of their money and their lives in the way of Allah.

A companion (*Sahaabi*) is that believer who, while a believer, saw the Prophet, at least one time during his life, if only for a moment, and who left this world with his faith intact. Some scholars have stipulated that in addition, his

association with the Prophet, upon whom be peace, should have extended over a period of time, and that he should have accompanied the Prophet in *Jihad*. This would amount to a period of six months at the least. They base their opinion on the fact that usually some one who sits with another for an hour, or who happens to see him once is not called that person's companion.

Another group of scholars says the excellence mentioned refers only to those who were with the Prophet, upon whom be peace, for six months or more; while all who saw him etc. are called his companions. However, the community has generally agreed that whoever caught a glimpse of the Prophetic beauty, even if only just once, is to be included among his companions, the most excellent people of the *Ummah*. In truth, one look at his radiance or one hour sitting in his presence and listening to him speak was an experience of benefit impossible to attain through meditation or long fasting. All of this has been mentioned in the book, *Qut ul Qulub*.

Ibne Abdul Barr, the great traditionist (*Muhaddith*), in reference to the excellence of the companions with relation to all the rest of the *Ummah*, has allowed that it might be possible for someone to come after them who is equal to or even better than they were.

He based his opinion on the evidence of the following traditions:-

1. *My Ummah is like rainfall – one never knows, will the beginning be better or the end?*
2. In a second tradition the Prophet, upon whom be peace, answered the question of one of his companions who

had asked if anyone was better than those who had accompanied him and fought alongside him, by saying:

"Yes, the people who will come after you and believe in me without their ever having seen me; They will be better than you."

3. In another tradition, *Ibne Masud* may Allah be pleased with him, relates that the Prophethood of Muhammad, upon whom be peace, was bright and clear to every one who saw him. Yet that person's faith is better who never saw him but believed in him just the same.

Some commentators of the *Quran* have explained that this is the meaning of the verse;

"Who believe in the Unseen" (2 : 2).

4. It is related in another tradition that following the *Sunnah* (way) of the Prophet in the last days will be more difficult than carrying burning coals in one's bare hands. Then, whoever follows the *Sunnah* in those days will receive the equivalent of the reward of fifty men. When one of the companions asked the Prophet, upon whom be peace, if he meant fifty men from among the companions or from among the people of the last days, he replied,

"From among you."

A number of other traditions similar to those related here have come to us. However, the best opinion is that held by the majority. The excellence of those who come after is due to one particular reason, their belief in the Unseen. Overall excellence belongs to the companions, may Allah be pleased with them.

A particular excellence possessed by one person need not contradict the overall excellence of another. *Ibne Abdul Barr*'s point is valid only when the general meaning of the term companion is intended, as in the case of one who saw the Prophet one time only; and not when the particular meaning is intended, as in the case of those who were his constant associates. For *Ibne Abdul Barr* concurs with the opinion that after them no one will come to equal their excellence.

Finally, there is no honour, no miracle, no virtue to equal even one look at the Prophet, upon whom be peace. Even though a number of saints have attained a metaphorical companionship, it is impossible that they should ever reach the excellence of the companions; and Allah knows best.

73. The four Khalifahs were the most excellent of the companions

والخلفاء الاربعة افضل الاصحاح

The four devout companions the rightly guided *Khalifahs*, the successors to the Prophet were the most excellent of the companions, and the closest of them all to the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. The traditions record that their merits, virtues, and good deeds in the way of Islam were unequalled by those of any of the other companions.

74. The order of their excellence is determined by the their Khilafat; and by excellence is meant abundance of reward

وفضلهم على ترتيب الخلافة، والمراد بالأفضلية أكثرية التواب

After the Prophet of Allah, upon whom be peace, *Abu Bakr Siddiq* took over as the rightful *Khalifah*; then came

Umar al Faruq, then *Uthman Dhu Noorain*, then *Ali al Murtada*, may Allah be pleased with all of them. This matter is one of absolute certainty according to the orthodox community.

Abu Bakr's right to the Khilafat, according to some, can be proved by the specific texts of authentic traditions. However, the general community of orthodox (*Sunni*) scholars take as the most effective of their proofs the consensus of the companions on the matter. All of the companions agreed that he was the rightful *Khalifah*, and they pledged him their allegiance in all worldly and religious matters, and they accepted his rule and his orders. This was the way the companions chose to go, and among them were the likes of *Abu Dharr*, *Ammar*, *Salman* and *Suhail*, may Allah be pleased with them, men who had never inclined from the way of true religion, and concerning whom the following Quranic verse had been revealed,

"Not fearing the reproach of any reproacher" (5 : 54).

Even though *Ali Ibne Abu Talib* and *Abbas Ibne Abdul Muttalib* and other leading companions like *Talha*, *Zubair* and *Miqdad Ibne ul Aswad* did not pledge allegiance at the same time that the rest of the companions did, their pledges came shortly after that; and they too agreed to support the *Khalifah*. *Abu Bakr* called them to him and ordered that a number of other companions present themselves also. Then he stood among them and, after reciting the praises of the Almighty, said;

"This is Ali Ibne Abu Talib, I am not forcing him to pledge allegiance to me. His choice is in his own hands, just as yours is in your own hands. If any of you knows someone more suited to be the Khalifah than I.

and sees in his being Khalifah the betterment and the welfare of the Muslims, then I will be the first to give that man my pledge."

Then Ali and all those present said;

"We know of no one more qualified than you. The Prophet of Allah, upon whom be peace, made you a leader in matters concerning our religion, and on the last day of his life ordered that you lead us in prayer. Notwithstanding the fact that we are his family, and counted among those who give advice and counsel, he asked not a one of us for his opinion. For this reason we know you to be the most suited to, and deserving of, this position."

Then Ali and those companions with him openly proclaimed their allegiance to Abu Bakr, and the consensus of the community was completed. The reason they did not pledge earlier is that they were engaged in carefully considering and weighing this most important of decisions. The fact that they took a little longer than the others does not mean that a concensus never took place.

Some say that the reasons for Ali's absence at the time of the general pledge was his preoccupation with the matter of burying the Prophet, upon whom be peace. Afterwards, they say that he went into mourning and seclusion for a while, busying himself with the gathering of the verses of the *Quran*. He was engaged in this way for a period of six months until, after the death of Fatimah, may Allah be pleased with her (his wife and the daughter of the Prophet) he finally came out and pledged allegiance to the Khalifah, Abu Bakr. Actually it was not even that long a time. Rather, at the end of that very same day, or the next, he declared his allegiance.

Overall, *Ali al Murtada*, may Allah be pleased with him, and always been loyal and obedient to *Abu Bakr*. He regularly made his daily prayers behind him, Friday prayers (*Juma'ah*), and the two annual Eid prayers. During the campaign against *Bani Hanifahh* in which the false Prophet, Musailama the Liar was killed, Ali fought under the banner of the *Khalifah* and accepted a share of the booty. If Ali had not been the *Khalifah's* loyal subject, he would never have been permitted to share in the spoils of war. No one in his right mind would suppose that *Ali*, the Lion of Allah, the Imam of the spiritual orders, the Hub of the Circle of Truth, the one who was with the *Quran* and with whom the *Quran* was – the Prophet's description of him as recorded in the traditions – would spend years and years of his lifetime making his prayers and his acts of devotion beneath the rule of a tyrant. Furthermore, it does not make sense that he, inspite of his knowing that the *Khilafat* was rightfully his, (as the *Shi'ahs* claim) would neglect to demand that right, but rather seal his lips and remain for such a long time the prisoner of pretenders to his throne and then, many years later, actively dispute with *Muawiyah* over that same right to the *Khilafat*. Why should he have waited all those years to fight?

It is recorded that *Ali*, may Allah be pleased with him said,

"I swear by the Lord, the Creator of mankind and the One who brings forth vegetation; if the Prophet of Allah, upon whom be peace, had enjoined that authority be passed on to me and no one else, then I would not let the son of Abu Quhaafah (Abu Bakr) set foot on even the lowest step of the Prophet's Mimbar. But when the Prophet, upon whom be peace, ordered Abu Bakr to be the Imam for prayers, notwithstanding

my presence and his knowledge of my position, then there is no room for argument in the matter. The man that the Prophet saw to be the best among us to lead in matters of religion is clearly the best to lead us in matters concerning this world."

The *Shi'ahs* say that *Ali's* actions were based on *Taqiyyah*, dissimulation of one's religion under duress or threat of damage. However, if the truth of the matter be known, then *Taqiyyah* under such circumstances (i.e. that *Ali* would choose to silently ignore his rightful position) would be considered nothing more than a blemish and short-coming on his part. It is absurd to suppose that *Ali* was afraid to speak up for fear of being killed when his faith had reached such heights of perfection that he could say;

"Even if the veil was lifted, my certainty could not possibly increase over what it is at present."

Likewise, it is unimaginable that he would act in such a way if the Prophet, upon whom be peace, had actually specified that he was to be the *Khalifah* after him; especially when such an order meant that, after the Prophet, he was to be responsible for enforcing the laws of Islam and upholding its banner. Then the claim of the *Shi'ahs* that *Ali* sat idly by just because he feared for his own life, if he sought his rightful place at the head of the Muslims, is an outright lie.

Another thing to consider is this; *Taqiyyah*, according to the *Shi'ah*, is exercised by one deprived of his rights at a time of weakness, defeat, or imprisonment. That was not the case here. *Ali*, may Allah be pleased with him, was famous for his bravery, rigidity and absolute trust in Allah. His wife, *Fatimah*, may Allah be pleased with her, was the

daughter of the Prophet of Allah, and was respected and honoured by all. Their two sons, *Hasan* and *Husain*, may Allah be pleased with them, were the grandsons and the most beloved of all creation to the Prophet of Allah. *Abbas*, the Prophet's uncle was among *Ali*'s followers, as was *Zubair*, the Prophet's cousin and the warrior of *Bani Hashim* most famed and respected for his daring and courage. What meaning could weakness possibly have in relation to these people?

It is related that *Abbas*, during the period prior to *Ali*'s pledge, said to him,

"Stretch out your hand and let me give you my pledge so that the whole world will say that the Uncle of Allah's Prophet has pledged his loyalty to the son of the Prophet's other uncle. After that no one will object to you being Khalifah."

*"What is wrong with you, O sons of Abdul Manaf? How is it that you can be pleased with a man of *Bani Tameem* as your leader? (The lowest of the clans in the tribe of Qureish was *Bani Tameem*, and Abu Bakr was of *Tameem*). If you claim the Khilafat for yourself, then I am ready to fill the valleys with armed men who will help rid us of this headache."*

But *Ali* refused them, and then rebuked them, saying,

"What you suggest is that we make enemies of the Muslims, and cause dissent and rebellion!"

What has any of this to do with *Taqiyyah*? The Shi'ahs claim that it was permissible even for the Prophets to use *Taqiyyah*, and even say that it was necessary. The claim that in cases of extreme danger and fear it was permissible

for the Prophets to use whatever subterfuge was necessary, even if they had to pretend that they were unbelievers! They claim that the Prophet of Allah, upon whom be peace, had it in his heart to appoint *Ali* as Imam for prayers on that last day, but that he was afraid to do so and instead, out of caution, (and *Taqiyyah*), appointed *Abu Bakr Siddiq* instead!

When the *Shi'ahs* admit this type of outlandish possibility with regard to the person of the Prophet, upon whom be peace, then what extremes will they not go to concerning others?

If the prophets took to hiding the truth, then what chance would there be of its ever being told? No tribe was ever more haughty than *Nuh's* tribe, and no one was ever more arrogant than *Nimrod*, nor was there anyone more tyrannical than *Firaun*. Yet, inspite of that, *Nuh*, *Ibrahim*, and *Musa*, upon all of them be peace, all spoke up for the truth in front of these corrupt and powerful rulers. What was *Taqiyyah* to them?

Once it has been established that all the companions were agreed on the Khilafat of *Abu Bakr*, may Allah be pleased with him and them, there can be no further doubts regarding his right to that office. Whenever such unanimous agreement takes place between the companions, or any entire generation of qualified people, then surely and without the shadow of a doubt whatever it is they have agreed on will be truth, as their concensus under those circumstances is inerrant. This concensus is called *Ijmaa*, and is a major principle at the base of much doctrine and legislation in the *Shariah*. In this particular case their *Ijmaa* has the added authority of the agreement of the great jurists and scholars of the succeeding generations as well.

The principle of *Ijmaa* differs from the more common method of independent legal reasoning (*Ijtihad*) in that it is innerant, whereas the single jurist might or might not arrive at the correct decision.

The principle of *Ijmaa* is mentioned in both the *Quran* and the *Hadith* of the Prophet, upon whom be peace. In the following verse of the *Quran* the general mention of guidance is followed by the specific method of how it is to be obtained.

"He guides whomsoever he wills to a straight path. Thus, We appointed you a midmost nation that you might be witnesses over all people" (2 : 143).

Another verse reads,

"But whoso makes a breach with the Prophet after the guidance has become clear to him, and follows a way other than that of the believers, him We shall put him in the Fire – an evil homecoming" (4 : 114).

It is recorded in the traditions that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said,

"The Ummah will never agree on an error."

It should be clear that the matter in which concensus has been achieved is truth. Were it allowed to be said that all or most of the companions intentionally erred in pledging themselves to *Abu Bakr*, and that they unjustly disobeyed the orders of the Prophet by purposely suppressing the truth, then the corruption of this statement would spread through the religion and its peoples like venomous poison. It would mean the end of the *Shariah* as we know it, because the laws and the sources of the laws,

like the *Quran* and the *Sunnah*, have all reached us by means of these very same companions. In the eyes of the *Shi'ahs* however, there was never a greater collection of 9 tyrants, reprobates, and concealers of truth than the companions! Nothing could be more shameful or odious! We seek refuge in Allah from delusion and stupidity!

Imam Fakhr ud Deen Razi, in one of his books, made a very ingenious deduction from the following Quranic verse;

An ant said, 'ants enter your dwelling places, lest Suleiman and his hosts crush you, being unaware' (27 : 18).

It is evident, he says, that *Suleiman's* ants were more intelligent than the *Shi'ahs* because one of them warned all the others to take refuge in their homes so that the unnoticing host of *Suleiman* would not trample them down. The ants did not allow that *Suleiman's* host, the servants and companions of a Prophet, would intentionally mow them down and tyrannise them, because the ant said of them, "being unaware." The *Shi'ahs*, however, say that the companions of the Chief of the Prophets, knowingly deprived *Ali* of his right, and thus openly performed an act of injustice upon a member of the Prophet's family! So for the *Shi'ahs* it is not too much even to accuse all the companions of a Prophet of plotting evil!

Generally speaking, there can be no better proof than the *Ijmaa* of the companions, as they were the people chosen by Allah to be entrusted with preserving and upholding the *Shariah*, and transmitting the *Sunnah*. Furthermore, all the legal workings of the religion at that time were in their hands. Secondly, *Ali's* obedience and loyalty to *Abu Bakr* is proof in itself of his contentment

with *Abu Bakr* as the rightful *Khalifah*. The greatest of all arguments in this matter is *Ali's* excellence and virtue, may Allah be pleased with him; that alongside these qualities of his he supported the religion and followed the *Khalifah*. What better proof could you ask for?

They relate the story of the answer given to the first Shi'ahs by the Commander of the Faithful, *Ali*, when he was asked to explain the reason why things went so smoothly during the reigns of the first three *Khalifas* and so badly during his;

"When they were Khalifas," he answered, "They had me to support them, give them strength and fortify them. Now that I am Khalifah I have only people like you to help me. There is no other reason."

The judicious intellect is forced to accept the consensus of the companions as nothing but the truth, and reject the notion that from among the companions of Muhammad, the Prophet of Allah the Messenger of the End of Time, the Guide of *Jinn* and Mankind, upon whom be peace and blessings everlasting, only a few found truth, guidance and the straight path, while the rest of the companions, those who had spent their entire lifetimes in the company of the Prophet, had strayed from the way of truth to the wastes of tyranny and falsehood; and that after the Prophet, upon whom be peace, they engaged themselves in applying their tyrannical ways to tampering with the *Shariah*, the foundation of the religion and the guide of the community! If this notion is not rejected outright, then the result will be that someone will go one step further and say that these shortcomings were due originally to shortcomings in the Prophet and in the religion itself! We seek refuge in Allah from such calumny! Then it is a certainty that the rightful *Khalifah* was *Abu Bakr*.

The *Zaydiyyah* sect, probably the most temperate of all the *Shi'ah* sects, say that the Khilafat was Ali's rightfully, but that *Abu Bakr* assumed the position as a measure of prudence in view of the fact that the blood of the enemies even among the newly converted Arabs. If Ali assumed the duties of the *Khalifah* right then, it might have been the cause of general unrest and a breakdown in the order of matters concerning the religion and community. On the other hand, with *Abu Bakr* as *Khalifah* there was a gradual quieting of the elements of corruption.

In any case, the basis of this *Shi'ah* creed and their starting point is the belief that *Ali*, may Allah be pleased with him, was the most excellent of the companions; and that the most excellent deserved to be the first *Khalifah*.

The scholars of orthodoxy have their reservations about accepting either of these two points. They say that it is not necessary for the *Khalifah* to be the most excellent and most perfect person of the times. The only requirements are that he be of *Qureish*, know the law and what is in the best interests of the religion, and that he be just, honest and courageous and generally able to perform the duties of the *Khalifah*. The traditions, history, and his biographers all attest eloquently that *Abu Bakr* possessed all of these traits.

Some scholars have turned to the documentary evidence of the traditions for proof of the authenticity of *Abu Bakr's Khilafat*. They say that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, specifically mentioned that *Abu Bakr* was to be his *Khalifah*. The truth of the matter is that there are no authentic traditions from the Prophet in specific support of either side; neither in support of the *Khilafat* of *Abu Bakr*, nor in support of the *Khilafat* of *Ali*.

If such evidence existed in support of *Ali*, it would have been impossible for the companions to come to a concensus (*Ijmaa*) in favour of *Abu Bakr*. *Hazrat Ali's* silence confirms this fact. If such evidence existed in support of *Abu Bakr*, then the *Ansaar* (inhabitants of *Madinah*) and the *Muhajireen* (immigrants to *Madinah* after the *Hijra*) would never have had to negotiate among themselves; each party suggesting and rejecting candidates. At one point someone suggested,

"One Amir from among us, and another from among you."

All of this points to the lack of any specific word from the Prophet with regard to either *Ali* or *Abu Bakr*.

The objection might arise that actually these negotiations were more along the lines of an inquiry into such evidence because, inspite of its existence, only a few companions know about it. In reply we would ask; why did *Abu Bakr*, after his nomination, then offer the *Khilafat* to *Ali*? And to other leading companions? If such evidence existed, (word from the Prophet of Allah that *Abu Bakr* was to be his *Khalifah*), then he would have understood the Prophet's order as binding up him. An order attested to by documentary proof is obligatory (*Wajib*) and not a matter that can be, humbly or otherwise, optioned out to others.

Similarly, it is related that *Abu Bakr* took the hands of *Umar* and *Ubaidah Ibne ul Jarrah* (called the "Trustworthy One of the Ummah" by the Prophet) and said to the assembled *Ansaar*,

"The Imamat is the right of Qureish, no one besides the Qureish can claim it. Choose from these two the one you want."

If *Abu Bakr* had been ordered, or informed by some one who had heard such an order, he would never have offered the *Khilafat* to someone else. Clearly, then, the choice of *Abu Bakr as Khalifah* was a result of the judgement and, finally, the *Ijmaa* of the companions.

The proofs adduced by both sides have been minutely documented, and anyone who wishes greater detail should turn to the appropriate books. I have not included those arguments here as that would be outside the scope of this book. And Allah is the Lord of Success.

Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, was installed as Khalifah and all the Muslims gave him their support. When he passed away he entrusted the *Khilafat* to *Umar*, may Allah be pleased with him, by sealed letter, ordering the Muslims to give their obedience to the one named therein. Then the companions, including *Ali*, may Allah be pleased with him, pledged themselves to *Umar*. *Ali* said, "We pledge loyalty to the one named therein, even if he be *Umar*." In this way there occurred a consensus on the *Khilafat of Umar* as well.

Before his martyrdom *Umar* specifically named six companions, *Uthman*, *Ali*, *Abdur Rahman Ibne Auf*, *Talha*, *Zubair* and *S'ad Ibne Abi Waqqas* and ordered them to choose the next Khalifah from among themselves. After much deliberation among the six, the matter was entrusted by them to *Abdur Rahman Ibne Auf* with the understanding that they would abide by his decision. His choice was *Uthman Ibne Affan*; and afterwards *Ali* and all the other companions pledged their loyalty and obedience in all worldly and religious affairs to the new *Khalifah*, *Uthman*, may Allah be pleased with him. Then his *Khilafat* was also backed by the consensus (*Ijmaa*) of the companions.

Afterwards *Ali Ibne Abu Talib*, may Allah be pleased with him, was singled out, being the most excellent of his times, for the *Khilafat* and was made the rightful *Imam* by concensus of the entire community. The dispute which arose during his *Khilafat* was due not to anyone's contesting his right of succession, but to insurrection and a mistake in judgement (*Ijtehad*) on the part of those who wanted the killers of *Uthman* brought swiftly to justice.

The second matter mentioned in the title of this chapter is that the excellence of the Khalifahs is based on the order of their Khilafats. Thus, the most excellent was *Abu Bakr*, then *Umar*, then *Uthman*, then *Ali*. We also said that the meaning of excellence was the abundance of reward from Allah – be He Exalted. This has been explained by some scholars in the following manner.

When we say that someone is better than someone else, he may be superior in every way by being better in every imaginable and comparable quality; or he may be superior on the whole by outstripping the other in most qualities, while the other might, in a few special qualities, exhibit some kind of superiority. Again, in a few special qualities, exhibit some kind of superiority. Again, it is possible that his superiority is due to his excellence in a certain special quality not exhibited by the other. This last reason for one's superiority over another has been the cause of some debate in the question of the relative excellence of the four *Khalifahs*. Superior knowledge, nobler descent, and personal virtues such as courage and ingenuity are usually understood to denote excellence. However, one's receiving a reward from Allah is not based exclusively on his exhibiting these characteristics. Rather, greatness of reward is connected with those virtues whose advantage and results are passed on to the religion of Islam in a

beneficial way; such as taking up the faith in the early days of Islam, assisting with the promotion of religion, adding to the strength of Islam, aiding the Muslims, abundance of charitable expenditure and good works, guiding others to the truth, and so on. They say that these virtues were found most in the person of *Abu Bakr*, may Allah be pleased with him. It is recorded in the biographies of the Prophet, upon whom be peace, that *Abu Bakr*, from the time of his accepting the faith, engaged himself in calling others to the truth and assisting in the promotion of the new religion. *Uthman Ibne Affan, Talha, Zubair, Sad Ibne Abi Waqqas, Uthman Ibne Mazun*, all leading companions and heads of the *Muhajireen*, accepted Islam at his hand. He was constantly engaged in refuting the arguments of the unbelievers and raising the banner of Islam both during and after the lifetime of the Prophet, upon whom be peace. It is recorded in a tradition related in the *Sahih* of the *Imam Bukhari* that in the early days of the Prophetic mission, when there was very little opportunity for practicing the rites of the Islamic *Shariah* in public, *Abu Bakr* erected with much ado his own mosque where he made his prayers regularly and openly read the *Quran* to the women, children and young people of the *Qureish* who would gather there to listen.

We shall now endeavour to reproduce here the opinions of the scholars on the question of the order of excellence. As a starting point, it should be kept in mind that the great majority of Sunni scholars favour the order mentioned above. However, it is related concerning *Imam Malik* and certain others that they would evince no opinion as to the relative excellence of the *Khalifahs Uthman* and *Ali*, may Allah be pleased with them. When *Imam Malik* was asked who the best of the *Ummah* was, after the Prophet, upon whom be peace, he replied,

"Abu Bakr, then Umar."

When he was asked his opinion concerning *Uthman* and *Ali* he replied,

"I have found no one from among the elders I have met who was willing to favour one of those two over the other."

A similar opinion was held by the *Imam ul Haramain* (*Al Juwainy*, a noted theologian and teacher of *al Ghazali*).

The opinion of *Ibne Khuzaima* was that *Ali* was the more excellent of the two. In *Jawaahir ul Usul* it is recorded that the opinion of the scholars of *Kufah* is in favour of *Ali*, and that this opinion was held by *Ibne Khuzaima* as well. The same is recorded in the *Muqaddemah* of *Ibne Salaah*. *Sufyan Thaury* (an *Imam* of *Fiqh* and contemporary of *Abu Hanifah*) held to the same opinion. So, from among the traditionists, *Muhammad Ibne Ishaq Ibne Khuzaima* favoured *Ali* over *Uthman*.

Muhiyud Deen Nawawi, in his commentary on *Sahih Muslim*, wrote that while certain *Sunni* scholars from *Kufah* favoured *Ali* over *Uthman*, the correct and accepted opinion is that *Uthman* was more excellent than *Ali*.

Qostelani, in his commentary on *Sahih Bukhari* wrote;

"Certain of the earlier scholars, among them Sufyan Thaury, favoured Ali over Uthman in the question of excellence. However, some say that Sufyan changed his opinion in the latter stages of his life; but Allah knows best."

Abu Bakr al Baihaqi, in his *Kitab ul l'tqaad* wrote; "Abu Thaur related on the authority of *Imam Shafei* that no one from among the *Sahaabah* or their followers (*Tabi'een*)

differed on the question of the excellence of Abu Bakr and Umar. If there was any difference of opinion, it was on the question of the excellence of Uthman and Ali."

The question that now arises is whether or not the order of excellence is a matter of certainty, something for which there exists indisputable proof, like the actual order of Khilafat; or a matter of uncertainty, for which the only proof available is of the nature of logical deductions? Some scholars are of the opinion that the matter is a certain one, while the majority opine that it is surely an uncertain one.¹

AND ALLAH KNOWS BEST.

75. Next in excellence we are the remaining six of the ten to whom Paradise was promised

فيما في العشرة المبشرة

"*Al'Ashara al Mubashara*" (the Ten Felicitated) is the name given to the ten companions, may Allah be pleased with them, informed by the Prophet of Allah, upon whom be peace, that they would be given entrance to Paradise. In the traditions it is recorded that;

"Abu Bakr will be in Paradise, Umar will be in Paradise, Uthman will be in Paradise, Ali will in Paradise, Talha will be in Paradise, Zubair will be in Paradise, Abdur Rahman Ibne Auf will be in Paradise, S'ad Ibne Abi Waqqas will be in Paradise, Said Ibne Zaid will be in Paradise, and Abu Ubaidah Ibne ul Jaraah will be in Paradise."

¹ The author goes on here to detail the arguments on both sides of this question. However, it seems quite unnecessary in the present circumstances to include them in this translation. The matter has been treated in sufficient detail already, and only a theologian or a polemicist would be interested in pursuing it any further. (trans.)

These ten men were the best of the *Ummah*, the most excellent of the companions, the greatest of the *Qureish* and the *Muhajireen* (those who made the *Hijra* i.e., migrated to *Madinah*), and the closest to the Prophet Muhammad al Mustafa, upon whom be peace. Their achievements and sacrifices in the way of Islam were unequalled by any of the other companions.

The becoming inhabitants of Paradise is certainty. However, this certainty is not restricted to them exclusively; as others like *Fatimah*, *Hasan*, *Husain*, *Ammar Ibne Yasir*, may Allah be pleased with them, also received the same good tidings. These ten, however, received their fame (and their name, *Al' Ashara al Mubashara*) because they were all informed of the promise at one time; and that is the way the tradition has come down to us.

Most people think that the promise of Paradise was given to no one besides these ten. However, this is clearly a mistake on their part, due perhaps to their lack of attention to the biographies and traditions of the Prophet, upon whom be peace. I have written a book dealing specially with this subject entitled *Tahqeeq ul Ishara Fi Tameem Al Bishara*. (The Truth of the Indication in the Promise's Generalisation).

Actually, the promises to the four *Khalifahs*, *Fatimah*, *Hasan*, *Husain*, and other leading companions, may Allah be pleased with them, are so well known as to approach the point of being universally accepted. The promises to the rest of the *Al-Ashara al Mubasharah* are also well known. However, the promises to all those besides those whom we have mentioned are less well known, and vary in their fame much in the same way that authentic traditions vary in their authenticity. Details in this matter can be sought in the above mentioned book. And Allah is the Master of Success.

76. Next in excellence are those who fought at Badr

فَاطِلْ بَدْرٍ

After the Ten Felicitated the most excellent of this Ummah are those who witnessed the battle of *Badr*. This battle took place in the second year after the *Hijra* and, owing to their victory there, the *Muslims* gained much glory and honour for Islam. This was the fulfillment of the Lord's promise of victory to His Prophet, upon whom be peace. Among the enemies of religion to be killed in the battle and then sent to Hell were the leaders of the idolatrous *Qureish*, *Ataba*, *Shaiba*, *Abu Jahl* and others. Also it was in this battle that five thousand angels came to the aid of the Muslim army.

The Ten Felicitated, may Allah be pleased with them, were all present, with the exception of *Uthman* who, by order of the Prophet, remained behind in *Madinah* to care for his sick wife, *Rugayyah*, the daughter of Prophet, upon whom be peace. Nonetheless the Prophet counted him among the soldiers and set aside for him a share of the spoils.

Those who witnessed *Badr* were three hundred and thirteen men, all without doubt bound for Paradise. It is recorded in the traditions,

When Allah beheld those at Badr, He said; "Do what you please, for I have forgiven you."

In another tradition it is recorded,

"Allah will never admit to the Fire those who witnessed Badr or Hudaibiyah."

The traditions also record that the angels who witnessed *Badr* are given a measure of respect and honour at the court of the Almighty not given the other angels.

77. Then those who fought at Uhud قاتلوا

Next are those who fought at *Uhud*. The battle of *Uhud* took place in the fourth year after the *Hijra* and was the scene of a severe trial for the Muslims. The battle was so fierce that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, had one of his teeth broken – nor was it simply a matter of losing the tooth from the roots, but a painful breakage which left him with only part of a shattered tooth. *Hamzah Ibne Abd ul Mutalib*, the Chief of the Martyrs of Islam was among the seventy companions, may Allah be pleased with them, martyred at *Uhud*. The leader of the party of unbelievers at *Uhud* was *Abu Sufian*, the *Ummayyed*. After the battle he swore that until he took revenge on Muhammad and his companions he would not approach his wife or oil his body. He later accepted Islam, however, alongwith his son *Muawiyah* in the year of the taking of *Makkah*.

78. Then those who took the pledge of Ridhwan

فأهل بيعة الرضوان

The pledge of *Ridhwan* took place after the treaty of *Hudaibiyyah* when the companions pledged their continuing loyalty to the Prophet, upon whom be peace.

"Allah was well pleased with the believers when they were swearing fealty to you under the tree" (48 : 18).

It is recorded in the traditions that the Prophet of Allah, upon whom be peace and blessings of Allah, said;

"No one who pledged his loyalty to me beneath the tree will enter the Fire"

Thus, those who pledge there will also be granted Paradise.

The order of excellence we have recorded here, on the authority of *Abu Mansur Tamimi*, is universally accepted.

After those we have mentioned above come the rest of the companions, may Allah be pleased with them. In accordance with their virtues and their deeds they will receive various positions and rewards, though the scholars have not specified anything in this regard. And Allah knows best.

After the companions, the most excellent of the *Ummah* are the learned and the devout. The following verse from the *Quran* gives witness,

"The most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is he who is the most righteous among you" (49 : 13).

79. Fatimah will be the First Lady of the women of Paradise, and Hasan and Husain will be the Chiefs of the Youth of Paradise

وفاطمة سيدة نساء أهل الجنة، والحسن والحسين سيدا شباب أهل الجنة

We make mention of this matter in a chapter separate from the other articles of faith because the tidings these three received are conclusive; while most people suppose that the only ones to receive such tidings were the ten felicitated. Furthermore, the family of the Prophet, the *Ahlul Bayt*, may the peace of Allah be upon all of them, are deserving of special attention.

According to Jalal ud Deen Sayuti, the words of the traditions indicate that Fatimah, may Allah be pleased with her, was the most excellent of all the believing women, including Maryam, Ayesah and Khadijah, as she was called the "First Lady of the Women of Paradise" by the Prophet himself.

Some traditions point absolutely to the superiority of Fatimah. Then again others, while mentioning her superiority over all the believing women, make an exception of Maryam, may Allah be pleased with her. Then these traditions admit the possibility that Maryam's rank is either greater than or equal to that of Fatimah. Another tradition states simply that the most excellent of women are Fatimah, Khadijah, Ayesah, Maryam and Asiyah, may Allah be pleased with all of them. The apparent meaning of this tradition points either to their equality or to a suspension of judgement in the matter. Still another tradition records that Fatimah was the best woman in her *Ummah* (the *Ummah* of Muhammad, upon whom be peace) just as *Maryam* was the best in hers.

Perhaps the entire matter can be explained in this way; the different traditions are due to the Prophet's being informed gradually of *Fatimah's* excellence through revelation (*Wahy*) and inspiration from the Lord, until there came a time finally that he, upon whom be peace, received word of her absolute excellence over all the believing women; but Allah knows best.

Some scholars have preferred Ayesah to Fatimah as she will live in Paradise with the Prophet, upon whom be peace, while Fatimah will live there with Ali; and, without a doubt, the Prophet's place in Paradise will be higher and more noble than that of *Ali*. Nonetheless, there are other

traditions in which Fatimah is addressed by the Prophet, upon whom be peace, as follows:

"Myself, you, Ali, and Hasan and Husain will share one place in Paradise."

Yet it is also well known that Ayesah was, in her own right, a great scholar of the *Shariah* and that she used to give legal decisions in the times of all of the four Khalifahs. Others say that after *Khadijah*, Ayesah was the most excellent of all the women in the world.

Sayuti in his *Fataawa* has written that there are six opinions on this matter. The most authentic of them is that Fatimah was more excellent than Ayesah. Another is that they were equal. Still another is that judgement be suspended. A great many *Hanafi* and *Shafei* scholars have leaned towards the latter opinion. When *Imam Malik* was asked about the matter he replied,

"Fatimah is the flesh of the Prophet. I consider nothing more excellent than the flesh of the Prophet of Allah, the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him."

Imam Subki said that this is his choice as well, and that Fatimah was followed in excellence by her mother, Khadijah, and then by Ayesah.

Another opinion recorded by *Sayuti* says that the best of all women were Maryam and Fatimah, while the best wives of the Prophet were Khadijah and Ayesah.

In the *Khasaals ul Kubraa*, a difference of opinion is recorded regarding Khadijah and Ayesah. A group of earlier scholars have mentioned that they consider Khadijah the more excellent of the two.

A number of traditions have come to us stating that the most excellent of the world's women were Maryam, Fatimah and Aisyah, the wife of Firaun (called *bint-e-Mazaaham* in some versions of the same tradition).¹

Shaykh Ibne Hajar has written that even though from this tradition it is apparent that Fatimah was more excellent than Ayesah, another tradition clearly indicates the excellence of Ayesha over the other aforementioned women. As the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said:

"The excellence of Ayesah in comparison to all other women is like the excellence of meat broth over all other food."

The weakest of slaves, may Allah help me to mend my ways, has this to say; In truth a person can be considered excellent for a number of different reasons. From the traditions we have been able to discern that Fatimah was the dearest to the Prophet, upon whom be peace, of all his children and that after Khadijah, Ayesah was the dearest to him of all his wives. If we did not consider the excellence of different personalities as a matter owing to a number of various reasons, we would be hard put to explain any of this material. For example, one tradition has it that the woman the Prophet loved most was Ayesah, and that the man he loved most was her father, *Abu Bakr*. Then another tradition has it that the woman most loved by the Prophet was *Fatimah*, and that the man he loved most was *Ali*.

Then, without consideration of the various roles and aspects of the personalities involved, there would be little

¹ And when the angels said; "Maryam, Allah has chosen you and purified you; He has chosen you above all the women in the world" (3 : 42). (trans.)

or no meaning to these traditions. Excellence means abundance of reward, and only Allah knows exactly what that entails. However, with regard to nobility of person and purity of character, no one can approach the excellence of Fatimah, Hasan, Husain and the other members of the Prophet's family, may Allah be pleased with them; yet Allah knows best.

80. The Khilafat after the Prophet endured thirty years. Afterwards there arose Emirates and Kingdoms

والخلافة بعد رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ثلاثون سنة، ثم بعدها
ملك وأمارة

It is recorded in the traditions that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said,

"After me there will be a Khilafat lasting thirty years, then there will be a gnashing kingship."

(i.e. only a very few will escape its bite). The thirty years were completed at the time of the martyrdom of *Ali*, may Allah be pleased with him. In fact, six months remained before the full thirty years expired. It was during this period that the *Imam* of the faithful *Hasan Ibne Ali* took over as *Khalifah*. The *Khilafat* came to a close with his death. Then this means that *Muawiyah* (the first of the Umayyad line of kings) and all those who followed him on the throne were not *Khalifahs*, but *Amirs* and *Kings*. Afterwards, the *Abbasids* called themselves *Khalifahs*, but this was nothing more than a hollow title. The *Shaykh* of the *Hanafi* scholars, *Kamal ud Deen Ibne ul Humam* has written in his book, *Al Musayara*, that all the scholars of orthodoxy are agreed that *Muawiyah* was of the *Amirs* and not of the *Khalifahs*. However, the scholars have differing opinions with regard to the question of whether or not *Muawiyah*

became the Imam after the death of *Ali*. Some say yes and some say no. Those who say yes, mean that he became Imam after Imam Hasan conceded the Imamat to him.

81. We confine ourselves to saying nothing but good about the companions

ونكف عن ذكر الصحابة الابخير

One of the fundamental precepts of orthodoxy is that we have nothing but good to say about the Prophet's companions, may Allah be pleased with them. We do not object to them, deny, or curse them. It is our way, in view of their companionship with the Prophet, to avoid anything which might be interpreted as being disrespectful to them. Their virtues and their good deeds in the way of Islam have received much mention in both the *Quran* and the traditions. From the *Quran*:

1. "Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and those who are with him are severe with the disbelievers, merciful to one another. You can see them bowing and prostrating, seeking bounty from Allah and good pleasure" (48 : 29).
2. "Allah is well pleased with them and they are well pleased with Him" (98 : 7).

From the traditions:

1. "My companions are like the stars; by whichever of them you follow, you will be guided."
2. "Honour my companions, for they are the best of you."
3. "Fear Allah! Fear Allah regarding my companions! Do not make them a target after I am gone. He who loves them does so from love of me; and he who hates them does so from hatred of me."

He who injures them has injured me, he who injures me has injured Allah, and who injures Allah will soon be punished by Him."

If we accept the authenticity of what has been recorded concerning shortcomings which occurred during their disputes, shortcomings of the nature of improper behaviour towards, and lack of regard for the rights of, the family of the Prophet, upon whom be peace, it is best that we ignore these matters and speak naught of them. Afterall, it is a matter of certainty that the companions benefited directly from the Prophet, upon whom be peace; whereas the narrations wherein these other matters are related are of questionable authenticity at best. It is an established principle that an uncertainty may never replace a certainty.

General speaking, to remain within the limits of Orthodox Islam one must refrain from speaking ill of the likes of *Muawiyah*, *Amr Ibne al Aas*, *Mughirah Ibne Shubah* and others.

It is related that, during the battle of *Siffin* (in which the rebel forces of *Muawiyah* clashed with the army of the *Khalifah*, *Ali*, may Allah be pleased with him), a prisoner from the rebel army was brought before the *Khalifah*. Among the *Khalifah*'s officers was one who recognised the prisoner and said,

"Praise be to Allah! I have known this man to be among the most devout of Muslims. Look at what he has come to now!"

The *Khalifah*, *Ali*, may Allah be pleased with him, said,

"What are you saying? He is still a Muslim!"

Furthermore, it is *Kufr* to curse a Muslim, unless there is positive proof to show that person is not really a Muslim. According to the scholars of orthodoxy, *Muawiyah* and his supporters were guilty of rebellion and treason against the rightful *Khalifah, Ali*, may Allah be pleased with him.

In a well known tradition of indisputable authenticity, it is related that the Prophet of Allah, upon whom be peace, prophecised concerning the fate of '*Ammar Ibne Yasir*', a close companion, as follows:

"O Ammar! The rebel group will kill you! You will call them to the Garden, and they will call you to the Fire!"

This does not, however, mean that the rebels had themselves left the fold of Islam. Accordingly, no one from among the scholars of orthodoxy has seen fit to actually curse the rebels. Furthermore, it has never been the way of our scholars to indulge in imprecation and abuse. The Prophet, Upon whom be peace, said;

"A believer is not abusive."

Furthermore, it is not permitted that one curse a living person in particular, even if that person is a disbeliever; as one cannot possibly know if that person will die a disbeliever. However, with regard to those persons about whom it is positively known that they died in a state of unbelief, to do so is permitted.

For the above reasons, then, certain scholars have suspended judgement on the permissibility of one's cursing the wretch, Yazid. Certain other scholars have even gone so far as to attempt to redeem his name by saying that once he became the Amir, supposedly with the agreement of all the

Muslims, it became incumbent upon *Imam Husain* to pledge his loyalty to him! We seek refuge in Allah from such a statement, and such a belief!

How could the Muslims agree to the appointment of Yazid as their Amir? Nearly all the *Sahaabah* still alive at that time and their offspring were opposed to him and refused to give him their allegiance. It is true that a number of them did travel from *Madinah* to Syria by force or otherwise, where they were honoured and banqueted. However, after they had seen for themselves the debauched state of the man, they returned to *Madinah* and renounced their allegiance to him, saying that he was the enemy of Allah, a drinker of wine, a non-performer of prayer, an adulterer, a reprobate, and a maker of the Haraam into Halaal.

Certain scholars have said that *Yazid* did not order the killing of *Imam Husain*, may Allah be pleased with him, and that, furthermore, he was opposed to such an act, and not at all pleased with the killing. This statement is also fallacious and untenable.

The animosity of that miserable one for the family of the Prophet, upon all of whom be peace and blessings of Allah, his gloating at their murder, and his delight at their humiliation are matters so well known to all that to deny them is next to impossible.

Certain other scholars say that his ordering the murder of *Husain* was Kabirah, as taking the life of a believer unjustly is a Kabirah; and as a Kabirah is not *Kufr*, it is not permitted to curse the one who commits it. For the life of me, I wonder what these scholars have to say about the many authentic *Hadith* which state that hatred for, animosity towards, disrespect of, and causing harm to

befall Fatimah and her children are the same as hatred for, animosity towards disrespect of, and causing harm to befall the Prophet of Allah, upon whom be peace? Especially when that is, beyond a shadow of a doubt, *Kufr*, and deserving of imprecation and of eternal consignment to the flames of Hell, as indicated in the following Quranic verse:

"Those who offend Allah and His Prophet will be damned in this world and the next" (33 : 57).

Certain scholars say that the final outcome of the man is unknown and that he may, after having committed all those sins and acts of *Kufr*, have repented and passed on to the next world with a final breath of repentance. *Imam Ghazali* in his *Ihyaa Ulum id Deen* seems to lean towards this opinion.

Other of the great scholars of this *Ummah*, like *Imam Ahmad Ibne Hanbal*, have openly cursed him. *Ibne Jawzi*, renowned for his caution in matters pertaining to the careful preservation of the *Sunnah* and *Shariah*, recorded in his book that a number of the pious predecessors had cursed him, while others had not, and still others had declined to offer an opinion either way.

As far as I am concerned, though, the man was the most odious of all mankind, and the crimes perpetrated on the *Ummah* by that wretch have never been equaled by anyone. He murdered *Imam Husain* and most of his family; he waged constant war against the descendants of the Prophet; he sent an army to destroy *Madinah* and annihilate its occupants including the remaining *Sahaabah* and those who followed them; and he sent an army to raze *Makkah* and murder *Abdullah Ibne Zubair*. And then he was himself sent to Hell.

May Allah preserve us and all Muslims from having sympathy or regard for him and his followers, and for anyone else who wished ill to, or strives to do harm to, or usurps the rights of, or who has no love for the family and descendants of the Prophet of Allah, upon all of whom be peace and blessings. And may Allah resurrect us in the company of those who truly loved the Prophet and his family, upon whom be peace, and may He keep us on the path that they trod. By the sanctity of the Prophet and his noble family, and by the favour and grace of Allah, the Near, the Answering; *Ameen!*

82. The Mujtahid is sometimes right and sometimes wrong

والمجتهد يخطئ ويفسib

Though the *Mujtahid* sometimes makes mistakes, he is excused when he does so. Actually, he receives a reward for his efforts regardless of the results. Whether or not he is guided to the truth is in the hands of Allah. In the traditions it is recorded that;

"If you are wrong, you will receive a reward; and if you are right, you will receive a double reward."

Some say that every *Mujtahid* is right because the truth, where he is concerned, is whatever his *Ijtehad* leads him to. This difference of opinion pertains only to *Ijtehad* as applied *Fiqh* (The systematic elaboration of positive law under its separate heads), because in this aspect of the law it is sufficient to act on the opinion the *Mujtahid* deems most likely to be correct. There is no need in such matters for the certainty and resolve demanded in matters of belief, where for every question there can only be one right answer. The requirements and conditions which when fulfilled enable one to practice *Ijtehad*, and precepts

concerning those who follow the *Mujtahids* have been mentioned in their proper places (and not in this book).

83. We do not accuse anyone of Kufr from among those who turn towards the Qiblah in prayer

وَلَا نُكَفِّرُ أَحَدًا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْقِبْلَةِ

Those Muslims who turn towards the *Kaabah* in *Makkah* to pray are called "*Ahl ul Qibla*", and as long as they follow the *Quran* and the *Sunnah* and profess the creed of Islam (i.e. There is no God But Allah and Muhammad is His Prophet), we should not call them disbelievers. Even if they make statements which followed to their logical conclusions necessarily indicate their disbelief, still we should refrain from calling them disbelievers until such time as they actually carry their statement to its logical conclusion. Likewise, if they seem to be unaware of the logical consequences of what they say, prudence dictates that we refrain from calling them disbelievers unless the connection of their statement to disbelief be blatantly obvious. Whenever possible we should attempt to find some innocent explanation for such statements, and do our best to clear up any misapprehensions that our Muslim brothers might entertain. Under no circumstances should we rush to charge them with an error or accuse them of *Kufr*.

It is related in the traditions that if a Muslim calls another a disbeliever, and that other person is not actually a disbeliever, then the accuser has made himself a disbeliever. The same applies to one who curses someone else. If the one he has cursed is not actually deserving of it, it will fall back on the one who first spoke it. Obviously, a good deal of restraint should be exercised in all of these matters.

84. Human Prophets are more excellent than angelic Prophets, angelic Prophets are more excellent than ordinary humans, and ordinary humans are more excellent than ordinary angels

وَرَسُولُ الْبَشَرِ أَفْضَلُ مِنْ رَسُولِ الْمَلَائِكَةِ
وَرَسُولُ الْمَلَائِكَةِ أَفْضَلُ مِنْ عَامَّةِ الْبَشَرِ

That Prophets from mankind are more excellent than angels can be gathered from Allah's ordering the angels to prostrate to *Adam*, upon whom be peace. Quite obviously, prostration is a major sign of subservience. When the excellence of *Adam*, upon whom be peace, has been thus established, it follows that the rest of the Prophets, upon whom be peace, must also be more excellent; as they have all been chosen for the same position of prophethood.

The excellence of men in general over the angels is evident from the fact that the performance of acts of devotion and worship, as well as the striving for perfection through partaking of certain things and abstaining from certain others, while containing a measure of difficulty implies at the same time a great deal of reward. If we understand excellence to mean greatness of reward, then this proof is complete. If, however, we understand it to mean purity of life and freedom from bodily contacts and blemishes, then obviously these things are to be found to a far greater extent in the angels than they are in mankind. For this reason, the scholars have pointed out that excellence has many aspects. In one respect one person might be better than another, while in another respect the other may be the more excellent of the two. Then this is no more than a mincing of terms.

When we consider the difficulties involved in performing certain acts of devotion and spiritual

disciplines, we think that we consider the closeness of the angels to the Almighty, their purity and light, we must assume that they are by far the more excellent. Nonetheless, man's perfection lies in his ability to attain the same closeness enjoyed by the Angels. Then, if we consider a man who joined with his humanity a character reflecting the names and attributes of the Divine, and habits befitting a *Khalifah* of Allah on this earth, we would have to say that excellence belonged to mankind.

In summation, the Prophet Muhammad, upon whom be peace, was the chief of all creation and the most excellent of men, *Jinn* and angels. This is the doctrine of orthodoxy; and it is Allah who prospers and assists.

85. It is true that miracles may be performed by Walis وَكَرَامَاتُ الْأَوْلِيَاءِ حَقٌّ

A *Wali* (Saint) is a Muslim endowed with *Marifah* (Knowledge of Allah) for whom the performance of acts of devotion has become habit and whose avoidance of sin and the pleasures of this world, however permissible, is complete. It is reasonable that miracles should be performed by such a person, while the truth of the matter is that his doing so is actually a miracle of the Prophet's, upon whom be peace.

The Prophet's miracles can be classified as follows:

1. *Those which took place before his prophethood (called Irhasat);*
2. *Those which took place during his Prophethood (Mu'jizat);*
3. *Those which took place after his departure from this world at the hands of his followers, the Walis (called Karamat)*

From here we can see how the miracles performed by the *Walis* also attest to the truth of Islam and the authenticity of the Prophet's mission.

The miracles (*Karamat*) attributed to the *Walis* of this *Ummah* are too well known to be denied; and news of them has come to us by means of absolutely authentic, (*Mutawatir*) traditions.

Some say that a *Wali's Karamat* is not in the same class with the *Mujizah* of a Prophet, like the Prophet Muhammad's splitting the moon. Others are of the opinion that the *Karamat*'s proceeding from a *Wali* is not connected to any intention or will on his part.¹ Furthermore, among those who claim that the *Wali* has a degree of will in these matters, there are those who deny the *Wali*'s using his *Karamat* as a proof of his claim to *Wilayah* (Sainthood).

The truth in these matters is as follows:

Firstly, it is possible for a *Wali* to perform as a *Karamat* any miracle that a Prophet performed as a *Mujizah*. Secondly, the limitation and restriction of the *Karamat* to those which take place unintentionally is incorrect. Rather, sometimes they occur with the foreknowledge of the *Wali*, and sometimes they do not. Finally, it sometimes happens in the case of those adepts whose foothold at the door of *Wilayah* is particularly firm and well founded that their *Karamat* occur in support of the truth of their claims to *Wilayah*. The actual benefit in such a claim is the affirmation of the truth of the Prophet's message, and the authenticity of his mission (as the *Wali's Karamat* is a result of his following the Prophet, upon whom be peace).

¹ No Miracle takes place unless it be the will of Allah. (trans).

They said, "The Shaykh Muhy ud Deen made many claims truthfully, in the interest of truth, and for the advancement of truth".

The miracle which will not take place is the one in support of the claims of a false Prophet. God forbid that they should be performed at the hands of the accursed enemies of Islam!

The performance of miracles is not a condition for anyone's being a *Wali*. There have been many Walis who never performed miracles. Their reaching the state of Wilayah is based undoubtedly on the diligence with which they follow the *Shariah*. According to the well known saying:

"Uprightness is better than miracles."

The wisdom behind manifesting these miracles (*Karamat*) in the beginning stages of Wilayah is the rearing of the Wali and the completion of his certainty in his spiritual devotions and exercises. In the final stages, the wisdom of the *Karamat* lies in the instruction of beginning devotees and the removal of their doubts and suspicions.

Altogether, there are four different kinds of miracles (*Khwaariq* those which "break through" the ordinary course of affairs).

1. *if the one who works the miracle has no connection with faith or good works, then the miracle is called Istidraj (fraud).*
2. *If the one who works the miracle is one of the faithful, a doer of good deeds, has knowledge of Allah (Marifah), and is devout, then the miracle he performs is called a Karamah.*

3. If it is accompanied by his true claim to Prophethood, then it is called a *M'ujizah*.
4. Sometimes ordinary believers, men of piety, perform things of this nature. These occurrences are called *Ma'unat* (assistance).

Sorcery, charms, legerdemain etc., cannot be properly considered miracles as their occurrence is based on the ordinary means of cause and effect. Anyone who properly manipulates the causes will receive results that correspond to the dictates of the normal course of affairs. The result of a doctor's prescribing the proper medicine will be the patient's recovery. The miracle however, is that which "breaks through" this normal course of affairs.

86. It is not possible for a Wali to attain the same level as the Prophets

وَلَا يَلْعُجُ وَلِيٌ درجة الأنبياء

No *Wali* could ever reach the level of the Prophets, because the Prophets, in addition to possessing perfections of character, were infallible (*M'asum* protected from sin), firmly established in their positions, free from the fear of having a bad ending, graced by Divine revelation (*Wahy*), enabled to contemplate the Divine Essence, and under orders to advise and convey the *Shariah* to all mankind. On the whole, the superiority of the Prophets to the Walis is a certain and concluded matter. Who would suppose the opposite becomes, according to the scholars, a disbeliever.

It has been said that;

"Wilayah is superior to Prophethood."

The meaning here seems to be the preference of Wilayah to *Nabuwwah* (Prophethood), and not of the Wali to the

Prophet. The reasoning behind this statement might be that *Wilayah* is a matter of closeness to Allah and seeking communications of Divine grace; whereas Prophethood consists of delivering the divine message to mankind and bringing to them all manner of perfection; and that the first relationship is superior to the second.

However, the truth is that a Prophet combines both relationships, so that he is all that the *Wali* is and more – and is, therefore, the more excellent of the two. Inspite of there, perhaps, being a way to reasonably explain this fantastic statement, it is contrary to everything we believe and, as it stands, is not at all acceptable. Because it is an anonymous statement we cannot be sure of just what is meant, but if the intention was to claim that a *Wali* is more excellent than a Prophet, then the statement is clearly erroneous and must be rejected.

87. A Muslim never reaches a point where the orders and prohibitions of the Shariah no longer apply to him

وَلَا يَصْلُلُ الْعَبْدُ إِلَى حِلْقَةٍ يَسْقُطُ عَنْهُ الْأَمْرُ وَالنَّهْيُ

The Muslim, as long as he is alive, can never go beyond being obligated to follow the *Shariah*. It is the claim of certain libertines and heretics that when a Muslim has reached a certain state of “perfect love” and purity of heart, so that his faith is firmly established, he is then excused from the dictates of the *Shariah*. Furthermore, they claim, if he was to commit a major sin (*Kabirah*) after reaching such a state, the Almighty would not send him to the Fire, or even punish him at all.

This claim of theirs is sheer heresy and abberation. Such people know nothing about Allah; because if they did, they would surely realise that when one’s love for the

Divine becomes more fervent, and one's heart more purified, and one's faith more firmly entrenched, one's acts of devotion and service grow increasingly more perfect. It is absurd to imagine that one would be less diligent in these matters; and to suppose that one would leave them entirely is lunacy. Furthermore, if Allah wills to hold His slave responsible for a major sin, or to punish him, He will do so; and if He does not, He will not.

As for someone's ever being released from the bonds of *Shariah*, there is no way. Who could be more eminent in their faith and love for the Almighty than the Prophets, upon all of whom be peace? And yet their obligation to the *Shariah* is far more complete and comprehensive than that of any one else.

Here the heretics will object; But the actions of the Prophets, upon whom be peace, were only for the sake of form and legislation of the precepts of the *Shariah*. For these reasons only it would not have been proper for them to do otherwise.

They are so ignorant of the *Shariah* that even the meaning of legislation is beyond their understanding! All the Prophets, upon whom be peace, busied themselves with legislation so that mankind could act upon, and find guidance in, what they had laid down for them. Then, if the wisdom behind all this legislation is not to go to waste, mankind must act upon the *Shariah*. The very meaning of legislation is obligation. Thus, those who would do away with this obligation would render useless the teachings of the Prophets, upon whom be peace.

88. The sacred texts should be interpreted according to their apparent meaning

والنصوص تحمل على ظواهرها

Wherever possible, the Quran and the traditions should be taken literally, and should not be turned needlessly from their meanings (a process called *T'aweel*). A detailed analysis of *T'aweel*, its conditions and requirements, when it is permissible and when it is not, can be sought in *Imam Ghazali's book, Faisal at Tafsir Bayn al Kufr wa al Zandiq*. And Allah is the Lord of Success.

89. Abandonment of the apparent in favour of the interpretations of the Batiniyyah is heresy

والعدول عنها الى معان يدعىها أهل الباطن الحاد

The heretical sect known as the Batiniyyah claim that the literal meaning¹ of the *Quran* and the traditions is not their real meaning, but that the texts are symbolic and figurative representations of the true and esoteric (*Batin*) meaning. Only those initiates who have received special instruction at the hands of a master can understand these symbols. They claim that a master is an infallible Imam, and that without his teachings no one can come to truly know (*Marifah*) the Almighty. This is heresy and sacrilege. If the only way to get at the true meanings of the texts is through a "Master", then what was the purpose behind the revelation of the Divine Books and, likewise, the sending of the Prophets, upon whom be peace, to all mankind?

The *Batiniyyah* suppose their master to be superior to all the Prophets, upon whom be peace, all their companions, and all their followers, because the Prophets were concerned with nothing more than the literal; it was the literal upon which they acted and by which they made their judgements. In truth, these heretics have as their goal

¹ In this chapter the word literal should be understood to mean the "apparent meaning of words" as opposed, on the one hand, to the symbolic and figurative and, on the other, to the etymological meaning and the actual denotation of the word. (trans.)

the destruction of *Shariah*. May they find themselves accursed and deserted by Allah!

The learned from among those who truly understand the esoteric say that the literal meaning of the texts is undoubtedly the intended meaning while, at the same time, these texts are rich in figurative and symbolic meanings that are in no way contradictory to the literal. For example, *Firaun* and *Musa* actually existed. The many disputes and events which took place between the two are historical truths. Yet, at the same time, if some one sees in these things a symbolic dispute between the heavenly soul and the earthly ego, then this is entirely possible. However, if, in making such an interpretation, one were to deny the existence of *Musa* and *Firaun*, claiming instead that there was nothing more to them than that they were symbols, then that would clearly be heretical.

Put off your shoes! (20 : 12).

In the above verse, *Musa*, upon whom be peace, was directed to come respectfully to the Holy Valley by setting aside his two sandals and proceeding on his bare feet. At the same time, the verse contains a symbolic reference to the devotees disregarding all thought of this and the next world when in the holy place (states) of contemplation and pure love of the Lord Almighty. What the verse does not say is that there is no such place as the Holy Valley. Nor does it deny that *Musa*, upon whom be peace, and his shoes ever existed. Nothing could be more unreasonable or sacrilegious.

90. There is benefit in the Duaa of the living for the dead, and in their giving charity in their stead

وَفِي دُعَاءِ الْأَحْيَا لِلْأَمْوَاتِ وَصَدَقَتْهُمْ عَنْهُمْ نَفْعٌ لَّهُمْ

A great many traditions of the Prophet, upon whom be peace, and his companions have come to us on this subject. *Janazah* (funeral) prayers are of the same category. The traditions record that a Muslim whose *Janazah* is attended by a hundred Muslims, all seeking forgiveness for him, will be forgiven. When *S'ad Ibne Ubaidah*'s mother, may Allah be pleased with both of them, passed away, he asked the Prophet upon whom be peace what the best of charitable acts would be under such circumstances. The reply was that giving water to the thirsty was the best of charity. Then *S'ad* dug a well and said,

*"This is for S'ad's mother."*¹

In another tradition it is recorded that;

"Duaa turns affliction away, and charity stifles the Lord's wrath."

The meaning is that these things are of benefit to the living and the dead, in this world and the next.

Another tradition records that when a teacher and his student pass through a town, the punishment of those in the town's graveyard is lifted for forty days. From here we can get an idea of just what the virtues of knowledge, teaching and learning happen to be. The visits to the graveyard of those who have memorised the entire *Quran*, and those who teach religion, are also known to be beneficial.

91. Allah is the one who answers Duaas and provides for our requirements

وَاللَّهُ مُجِيبُ الدُّعَاءِ وَقَاضِيُ الْحَاجَاتِ

¹ Notice that, in all acts of devotion, the Niyyat (intention) is of utmost importance. (trans.)

The Almighty, may He be Exalted, through His generosity and grace accepts the supplications, and fulfils the needs of His slaves. If one sincerely attends to the performance of *Duaa* (supplication) and puts his heart into it with tears and humility, then it will surely be answered in either this world or the next.

There are a number of conditions and prohibitions involved in having one's *Duaa* answered. The most important of these conditions is that the suppliant be fully attentive, and a consumer of nothing but *Halaal*. The things most strictly prohibited are seeking a quick answer, and complaining when one does not come; or one's complaining that after so much *Duaa* he has yet to receive any results.

Even though one might not fulfil all of these conditions, or avoid all these prohibitions, one should always keep in mind that the Lord's grace, generosity, and mercy are always nearby.

On the whole, *Duaa* is at the core of all worship. As the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said:

"Duaa is the marrow of worship."

In the same way that other forms of worship are obligatory at certain times (prayers and fasting) and under certain circumstances (such as possession of wealth for Zakat and Hajj), *Duaa* is also to be considered necessary at times of worry and distress. The Almighty, be He Exalted, has said;

"Call upon Me, and I will answer you (40 : 60).

Persian Couplets:

*Never drop the hands of supplication.
No concern of yours is its rejection.
Many times you've asked for ruination.
Allah makes the final dispensation.*

By way of example, a farmer once went to a Sultan and asked him for an Arabian horse. Instead, the Sultan gave him an ox. Although this could be termed a rejection, it was in another, more beneficial way an answer; because the Arabian stallion would have broken the poor farmer's neck. Then, keeping it from him was actually in his interest, and an act of sheer kindness. Undoubtedly the farm ox was of far more benefit to him than the Arabian stallion could ever have been.

Thus, the unanswered *Duaas* for the superfluous things of this world, and the gratification of personal desires that if answered would serve only to draw the Muslim away from his Lord and closer to torment in the next world are of this category.

The person who has been granted an understanding of Allah and who remembers Him with favour under all circumstances will have reached a state where giving and withholding, as far as he is concerned, are just different ways of saying the same thing. This is the origin of the saying,

"Receiving gifts from mankind is deprivation; while Allah's withholding is charity."

The *Duaas* of the unbelievers go unanswered, except for those made for worldly matters,

But the Duaas of the disbelievers is only in error (13 : 14).

However, the *Duaas* of the oppressed are always answered, whether the oppressed are believers or not; And Allah knows best.

92. Prayer is permissible behind any saint or sinner

ويجوز الصلاة خلف كل بروم فاجر

The Muslim should never miss congregational prayers; and whether a pious and learned *Imam* happens to be present or not, the congregation should be formed. The virtues of prayer said in congregation have been attested to by the Prophet of Allah, upon whom be peace, in numerous *Hadith*. The measure of attention given by the Prophet to the community prayers and the attendant gathering and unity of the Muslims far exceeded the attention he gave to any other such matter.

Naturally, if there happens to be a pious and learned man in attendance, then it is better that he lead the prayers.¹ However, if such a man cannot be found, it is permissible for any Muslim to lead the prayers; even if he happens to be a sinner. This is on condition that his sinning and immorality do not openly bring his belief into question and, secondly, that he knows the rules and procedures involved in leading prayer and, thirdly, that he knows enough of the *Quran* by heart as is necessary for the performance of prayer.

93. We regard wiping the Khuffain at home and abroad to be permissible

¹ Of course, if there is an appointed *Imam*, then he is the one with the most right to lead prayers. The above refers to situations where such an *Imam* is not available. (trans.)

ونرى المصح على الخفين في الحضر والسفر

Our belief in the permissibility of wiping shoes has become a sign of orthodoxy; that it is proper at home one day and one night and, while on a journey, three days and three nights. It has been said that the signs of orthodoxy are three,

"The pre-eminence of the Shaykhain (Abu Bakr and Umar); the love of the Khatanain (or two sons-in-law, Uthman and Ali, both of whom were married to daughters of the Prophet), and the wiping of the Khuffain."

All of these are things which the innovators and enemies of religion deny. *Hasan Basri* said,

"I met seventy companions of the Prophet, and all of them understood the wiping of the shoes to be permissible."

It is related that the Commander of the Faithful, Ali, was asked about wiping the shoes. He answered,

"For the traveler, three days and nights; and for the stay at home, a day and a night. This is just as I heard it from the Prophet of Allah, upon whom be peace."

In another tradition, Ali said,

"If religion and the Shariah were simply matters of reason and analogy, then it would have been the bottoms of the shoes that we wipe. But matters of religion depend upon the orders of Allah and His Prophet; and the order has been given to wipe the tops of our shoes."

Even though the washing of the feet is an act of resolution (*Azeemah*), and wiping them merely a concession, it is our belief that it is nonetheless permissible. Should we find ourselves in a position where it becomes necessary to distinguish ourselves from the others (innovators), it is better that we act on the concession, (though in normal circumstances the act of resolution is the one which gives greater rewards).

94. One's regarding a major or a minor sin to be Halaal, or his attaching no importance to either of them are both acts of Kufr

واعتلال المعصية صغيرة كانت أو كبيرة واستخفافها كفر

Even if one should be overcome by his desires and natural human tendencies and then commit a sin, he should still realise that what he has done is wrong, and that he has been at fault. Making light of a minor sin also falls under this heading in the case of the person who considers it to be next to nothing, and something for which no punishment is required. Otherwise, it is obvious that a minor sin is a less weighty matter than a major sin, and that the wrong involved therein is on a much lower level.

95. Deriding the Sharah and disdaining it are acts of Kufr

والاستهزاء على الشريعة والاستهانة بها كفر

Both are signs of denial and rejection.

96. A statement of disbelief, even if made in jest, is Kufr

والهزل بالكفر كفر

If one were to speak, in jest, words of disbelief, without actually meaning or believing what one said, one

would become a disbeliever. This is because one's joking about such a matter indicates that he attaches no importance to it; and whenever one treats even a sin lightly, he commits an act of disbelief. So if one treats unbelief lightly, one has committed, with all the more reason, an act of disbelief.

This applies even when the speaker does not realise that what he is saying is *Kufr*, because ignorance is no excuse in this matter. However, according to some scholars, he may be excused on the basis of his ignorance. This is supposing that one spoke the words intentionally (as in a joke). However, if the words escaped as a mistake, forgetfully or impulsively, then one cannot be considered to have committed an act of disbelief.

97. A judgement of Kufr may not be pronounced on the basis of the sacreligious ravings of a drunkard

وَلَا يُحْكَمُ بِكُفْرِ السَّكِرَانَ

The irrational and raving drunk who has lost all control of himself will not be considered a disbeliever if he makes a statement of disbelief in that condition. At the same time, any other transactions he might undertake, such as divorce, freeing a slave, buying and selling, etc. are all valid and must be carried out (no matter how foolishly he has bargained) as a sort of reprimand.

From here it would seem that he should also be held responsible for his statement of disbelief in such a condition. The difference is that disbelief and apostasy are reprehensible matters and, as such, must, whenever possible, be put aside. (That is to say that these things are directly opposed to Islam and all that it stands for, and for this reason the *Shariah* takes advantage of even the slightest opportunity to do away with them. trans.) Then, in

the case of the drunkard, the *Shariah* has considered his loss of reason to be grounds enough for the rejection of his statement of disbelief. On the other hand, Islam is something desirable and sought after, and must in every possible way be upheld.

It is recorded that *Imam Shafei* said that the drunkard who makes a statement of disbelief must be held responsible for what he says. According to one narration, *Imam Abu Hanifahh* held a similar opinion at one time, (though the first judgement of the *Hanafi* school is what we have mentioned above).

98. Acknowledging the truth of what a soothsayer purports to communicate from the unseen is *Kufr*

وَلِصَدِيقِ الْكَاهِنِ بِمَا يُخْرِجُ بِهِ عَنِ الْغَيْبِ كُفْرٌ

Both accepting his claim to knowledge of the unseen and believing him in what he reports of the unseen are acts of disbelief. It is recorded in the traditions that: *No one who goes to a sorcerer or a soothsayer and then believes what he says can (at the same time) be a believer in the religion that Muhammad, upon whom be peace, brought to mankind.*

Astrologers fall under the same ruling as soothsayers. Anyone who believes for a certainty that what they say is true is a disbeliever. On the whole, the effect of the stars and celestial bodies, or on the part they play in determining the hot and cold seasons, rainfall or the lack of it, the ripening of the fruits and a host of other similar phenomenon is a well known fact. However, these things are indicative only and not, in the real sense, determinative. Furthermore, they have nothing whatsoever to do with human affairs such as happiness and good fortune.

Even if we were to suppose that astrology was permitted in the *Shariahs* of the earlier Prophets, upon whom be peace, we know for sure that permission has been rescinded in this *Shariah*. May Allah protect us from the prattling of astrologers and the like.

99. To give up all hope of receiving Allah's mercy is Kufr

واليأس من الله كفر

"*Of Allah's comfort no man despairs excepting the people of the disbelievers*" (12 : 87).

No one who commits a sin or strays from the path of obedience should despair of the Lord's mercy. If one repents, one will surely be forgiven; and if one does not, the possibility still remains that Allah, through His unbounded generosity and kindness, will forgive him.

100. To suppose oneself safe from Allah is Kufr

وآلامن من الله كفر

"*Only they feel secure against the plan of Allah who are certain of being ruined.*" (7 : 99).

The word 'Plan' (مَكْرُ) originally means to conceal, to deceive; "Allah's Planning" refers to the dismissing, for a time, the sins of His slaves, and then His opening to them the doors of ease and plenty until they become deluded and negligent. His plan is complete when, of a sudden, He takes them when they least expect it.

101. True faith lies between fear and hope

والإيمان بين الخوف والرجاء

It has been said that a Muslim's faith should be such that if it were announced tomorrow that only one person will enter Paradise, he would have hope of being that one. Similarly, if it were announced that only one person will enter the Fire, he would be afraid lest he were the one to go.

Persian Couplets:

*The honoured ones in Allah's sight debate,
No word of what the Lord has willed as fate.
Do not despair! His mercy's always near.
Nor be deluded; always live in fear.*

Another thing is that fear should be dominant during one's lifetime. However, at the approach of death, if that fear is overcome by hope, then this should be taken as a sign of success. Hope has been mentioned last in the saying:

"True faith lies between fear and hope."

perhaps to indicate either the final overcoming of hope, or the predominance of the fear of Allah during one's lifetime.

"Know that the punishment of Allah is severe, but that Allah is also forgiving and kind" (5 : 98).

All praise to Allah that this book has been brought to a close in hopes of His forgiveness and Mercy. May good come of it.

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